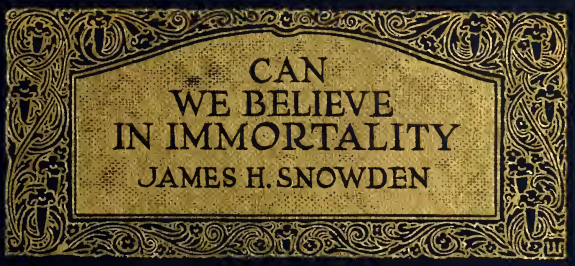

1. Immortality.

# CAN WE BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY?


THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO · DALLAS
ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO

# CAN WE BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY?

BY

JAMES H. SNOWDEN, D.D., LL.D.

*Author of "The World a Spiritual System: An Outline of Metaphysics," "The Basal Beliefs of Christianity," "The Psychology of Religion," etc.*

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1918

If a man die, shall he live again?
I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that he will stand up at the last upon the earth:
And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed,
Then without my flesh shall I see God;
Whom I, even I, shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.

— JOB.

The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, even my Father's.

On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him.

— CARLYLE.

The heart has reasons which the reason does not know. It is the heart that feels God, not the reason. The primary truths are not demonstrable, and yet our knowledge of them is none the less certain. Principles are felt, propositions are proved. Truths may be above reason, and yet not contrary to reason.

— PASCAL.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep
I heard a voice, "Believe no more,"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, "I have felt."

— TENNYSON.

For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

— PAUL.

# PREFACE

The literature on the subject of immortality is enormous. The question of a future life is one of the oldest and most fundamental in the history of human thought and goes back to the beginning. One of the most ancient books in existence is the Egyptian *Book of the Dead,* and one of the oldest books in the Bible, Job, deals with this problem. All the bibles and literatures of the world are full of it. The library shelves loaded with these books run back through the centuries and are lost in the mists of antiquity. William R. Alger's work entitled *The Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life* has appended to it Ezra Abbot's well-known bibilography of the literature of this subject and it contains nearly five thousand titles in eleven languages; and if it were brought up to date there would doubtless be added to it a thousand titles more.

Are not these enough? Why any more? For the same reason that last year's leaves in the forest are not enough and it must put forth new leaves every year. Every subject is constantly advancing and must be continually written up to date. We cannot express our

thoughts in the ideas of the last generation any more than we can wear their clothes or breathe through their lungs. Alger's book itself is one of the profoundest, most comprehensive and most eloquent works ever written on this subject, yet it is nearly sixty years old and at many points is plainly out of date. This is strikingly indicated by a single and apparently trivial fact in the index of Abbot's bibliography: it contains the name of Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather, but not the name of Charles Darwin, the grandson. A Copernican revolution has taken place since that date.

The more recent books on the subject have their special points of merit, though some of them do not help much. The author has read the successive volumes of the Ingersoll Lectures at Harvard in which a number of distinguished men, mostly psychologists, have given their views on this subject; and, as the sexton of Christ church in Oxford said that he had heard the Bampton Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity for twenty years and was still a Christian, so the author can say that after reading these Ingersoll Lectures he still believes in immortality. Any book only five or ten years old on this subject has likely lost touch somewhat with the existing situation. The war is calling for new adjustments at this point as at so many others.

The present book discusses the question of immortality in the light of the crisis that is now so severely trying our fundamental faith. It aims to sum up, in brief chapters, in the light of both science and Scripture, the chief points of the problem as it presses upon us. Some of the chapters are obviously the play of meditation and imagination around the borders and central heart of the subject rather than the linked logic of direct argument. The author hopes that the reader's faith in immortality may be strengthened, as his own has been, by this study of this old but ever new question.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# CONTENTS

# CAN WE BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY?

## I

### AN URGENT QUESTION

THIS question of the ages has become an urgent question of the hour. Always lying latent in the universal human heart and at moments flashing into consciousness, at times it breaks up through all the crusts of life in eruptive power. The world-convulsion of war, that is now shaking the earth to its core, has brought it up out of the deeps, where along with all great things it has its abiding seat and source. Unexpectedly as the undreamed of and monstrous explosion of Vesuvius in 79 A. D., Europe suddenly, on August 1, 1914, burst into an enormous volcano vomiting fire and blood over several continents, which has widened its flaming rim around the earth and is swallowing up the flower of the youth of many nations. Our sons are now marching into its fiery crater and disappearing from our sight. Are they gone for ever and have all our service and sacrifice and love and hope for them vanished as meteors in the night? Is all this appear-

ance of meaning and worth in human life an illusion and delusion, a hollow show and cruel sham? Is the universe only a huge corpse-trench which the vast cosmic Serpent of Eternity is crushing in its frightful coils? Or does the world mean intensely and mean good? Is the hope of immortality planted in the very foundation of our being a true instinct and does it really have a glimpse of "the green mountain-top of a far new world"? Is this awful world-convulsion the travail in which many of our noblest sons are being born into a higher and better life? Does every battlefield open the door for hundreds and thousands into endless night, or into eternal morning? According to our answer to this question will our world be irradiated with central glory, or be dust and ashes at the core?

Millions of people are eagerly searching their own hearts or scanning the horizon of our thought and literature for any word of comfort or gleam of hope on this intense point, some with the assurance of faith, and others in the uncertainty of doubt or in the darkness of despair. The question is far from being exhausted but is constantly presenting new aspects in the midst of our ever expanding knowledge. Any word that throws new light or puts fresh emphasis on old reasons may be a helpful service and comfort to many in these trying times.

## II

### AN OLD QUESTION

FAITH in human immortality is very old. The ancient Egyptian painted it upon his coffins and built it into his vast stone pyramids, and the Babylonian stamped it upon his clay tablets centuries before Abraham left Mesopotamia to follow the gleam of a clearer faith and hope. It dates back to the birth and infancy of the race and is embedded in the geology of human history.

All the greatest and most vital things in the world are old. Has the race grown tired of bread because it has been nourished by it so long? Old things that have withstood the test of the centuries and have some substance and staying power in them are ever the best: old mountains and rivers, continents and constellations; old books, Shakespeare and Homer and the Bible; old inventions: plough and sickle and loom. Compared with our modern novelties and wonders these old things are as the eternal burning of the stars compared with blazing straw and flashing meteors. Faith in immortality is old because it is a primary and fundamental

need that can no more pass away than can the need for bread and water. It has an honourable history, extending as wide and deep as the consciousness of the race, engaging the thought of the profoundest thinkers, poets and prophets and philosophers, producing some of our noblest literature and richest art, furnishing the main ground and goal of religion, giving infinite worth and eternal plan and purpose to our life, and comforting the human heart in its deepest and darkest sorrows; and it has not withered in the light of our modern knowledge but has grown with all our growth and is a living and fruitful fact and force in the present hour.

## III

### A QUESTION OF PROBABILITY AND FAITH

Our question is one of probability and faith. But this fact need not alarm or even surprise us, for few of our beliefs are of any other degree of assurance. Only mathematical demonstrations reach absolute certainty, and even this is questioned by some thinkers. All our practical conclusions rest on probability of greater or less degree, and such knowledge answers our purposes, for we act upon it with full confidence. We may not demonstrate the immortality of the soul so as to put it beyond the doubt of sceptical or thoughtful minds, but we may reach it along converging lines of probability which meet in a focus of faith that becomes "the fountain light of all our day, the master light of all our seeing."

It is probability, furthermore, that leaves room for the exercise of faith and enables us to make the great adventures of life. Faith is a step into the unseen and implies some risk and courage, a venture that tries the soul and turns its trial into triumph. Were it possible

for us to take all faith out of life and reduce it all to sight and certainty, we would thereby level the heights of aspiration and inspiration, sweep all visions out of our sky, and lower life to a dull routine of mechanism and drudgery. The animal has no factor of faith and hope in its instinctive life, "the present only toucheth it," but man faces the unknown future that is the field of his problems and possibilities, the ocean on which his "purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset, and the baths of all the western stars." There would be no wonder and surprise, venture and courage, vision and victory, in a world without faith. The power of faith is one of the marks of the greatness of man, and death gains infinite interest and worth from the fact that it is faith's sublimest adventure.

The first as the final word on this subject is faith. This is not to base the great hope on an untrustworthy foundation or illegitimate kind of belief, for after all our reasoning on any subject we must fall back upon this primal and fundamental principle. We begin and end with faith in all our beliefs and actions. Life is vastly more than logic. Primal instincts and impulses push us into action before we reason about them. "Man is endowed with reason," said Benjamin Franklin, "in order that he can give reasons for what he

wants to do." We must trust something before we can know or do anything.

All the really great things of life and the world are matters of faith. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." By faith the scientist trusts his senses and instruments, trusts the universality of law and the integrity of the universe, and looks backward to primal cells and molten globes, and forward to cooling planets and coffined worlds. Business is built on faith. Let mutual confidence be destroyed or impaired and a panic sweeps across the financial world with the levelling force of a tornado. We carry on all the activities of life by faith, we walk by it. It is the common ground under our feet, the mutual bond that binds and holds society together, the vital breath of friendship and love. It is the necessary basis of international peace and welfare. Destroy this common bond of trust, turn treaties into scraps of paper, and the world will be thrown into a convulsion of war.

By faith Columbus discovered a new world, and Luther shattered religious despotism, and Lincoln liberated a fettered race. By faith men of genius see visions and write them into poems and carve them into

statues and build them into cathedrals and paint them in pictures and sing them in songs. By faith prophets have foreseen the slopes and summits of future achievements and victories and unveiled their glory to the world. By faith martyrs and soldiers have given their blood for the blessing of coming generations. Could we remove faith from the world we would undermine and throw down its corner foundation stone and its central column and let its whole structure fall in ruins.

Men busy in the marts of trade or absorbed in their senses in their science may think that faith is only a film of fanciful speculation or a glittering bubble that will soon burst, but they are blind to its reality and power. Faith is a fact as solid as the mountains, and a force that pulses in and pushes all our life. Often it has been ridiculed as a visionary dream, as when Columbus saw a track across the Atlantic and Cyrus Field saw an electric cable under it, but it has fought and forced its way to victory with the momentum and might of a glacier or a continental river. However far we may wander from faith, however dim may grow our vision to its splendour, yet it must remain as the central fact and supreme worth of life, and sooner or later it will draw us back by its mystic attractions. We live by faith and without its vital breath our souls would die.

Our faith in immortality is much older and deeper than our reasoning and proofs in connection with it. It is a constitutional instinct and impulse which begins to act with the beginning of human experience and grows with its growth as a practical necessity. Reason did not create it and reason cannot destroy it. God hath set eternity in the heart, and therefore eternity comes out of the heart before the mind begins to reason about the grounds on which it rests. "We do not believe in immortality because we can prove it," says Dr. Martineau, "but we try to prove it because we cannot help believing it."

But if our faith in immortality is deeper and more secure than all our logic, why go through all this unnecessary reasoning? If this "intellectual business is eminently a dust-raising process," why stir up the needless argument and raise the dust? Because the human mind also has an instinct for rational inquiry and confirmation. It cannot rest content even with the deepest instincts of the heart, but as these emerge into the field of conscious logical analysis they must submit themselves to examination at the open bar of the brain as well as in the secret chamber of the heart. Our fundamental instincts are thus rationalized and confirmed, and they are also clarified and purified, controlled and guided. Our great hope of immortality

may at first be a mystic feeling of the heart, but it is also at last the reasoned conviction of the mind, and then our total faith is clearer and stronger.

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee.
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster.

## IV

### THE USE OF ANALOGY

A WORD may be said on the principles of procedure in this inquiry. We have no new faculties or processes for peering into the beyond, but must use the long accepted and tested means of confirming faith and widening knowledge. The mind, using all its faculties of reason, feeling and will, must advance from the known to the unknown. We must build on secure foundations of fact and experience any structure of faith which we propose to throw out as a bridge from the abutment of this world across the river of death. "To the solid ground of nature trusts the mind that builds for aye."

One principle is of special value in this inquiry: the principle of analogy. We must believe as an axiom of fundamental faith that the universe is one in its origin and nature. Though at first it appears as an infinite chaos, yet we must believe that it coheres in a comprehensive harmony in which all its radii run to one centre and all its elements melt into a final unity.

We cannot prove this faith, as we cannot prove any axiom or intuition, but it is the necessary ground of all reasoning, in science as truly as in philosophy and religion. Feeling is older than intellect, as the heart is biologically older than the brain, and we must always start with faith. We must always believe something before we can prove anything, and all our reasoning begins in the middle of things and is based on trust.

This fact of the unity of the universe is the ground and principle of analogy by which we project the known into the unknown, or spin threads of faith and reason out from the seen to the unseen. Thus the geologist, having observed the processes going on in the crust of the existing earth, projects them back to the primal planet; and the astronomer, standing on a tiny arc on the relatively minute globe under his feet, trusting to analogy, boldly predicts the existence and position of unseen worlds and constructs the whole stupendous heavens. We are always reconstructing the past and also projecting the future in accordance with the analogy of the present. This principle does not stop at the edge of the grave or the horizon of this world, but also enables us to project this life into the future and draw some legitimate and sound conclusions as to the next world.

It is true that this use of analogy has its dangers

and requires caution. We must beware of fanciful analogies that have no real resemblance and root in common fundamental principles. It is easy to indulge in fantastic speculations as to the future life that do not rest on any other foundation than one's own imagination or fancy; and such cloud-structures do not attract but repel sober minds. Yet the abuse of this principle does not discredit its proper use; and analogy, informed and guided by trained insight and imagination, is a true bridge on which we may cross the chasm between the seen and the unseen, even from this world into the next.

What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
Each to other like more than on earth is thought?
— *Milton.*

## V

### NEGATIVE VOICES

We should always consider the opposition. Truth is always complex and polygonal and presents some aspect of reality on every side. Error is usually partial truth, or a one-sided view, and thus it has some element of truth which gives it plausibility and vitality and which we should strive to see. It is our duty to give full audience and due weight to every voice on this subject, and to refuse to do this is equivalent to suppressing evidence and packing the jury. The higher and holier the cause, the weightier and more solemn is the duty resting upon us of seeking only the truth.

Let us face the objections to this hope. There are objections to it of logical soundness and force, and at times they sickly o'er our clearest faith with the pale cast of their thought and give us hesitation and pause. We may wish it otherwise and would fain have sunclear faith unclouded by shadows. But such faith is not possible in the case and would scarcely be faith. Facts are facts, and we must take them as they are and

bear with the arduousness of reality. Our faith must stand the fiercest and most pitiless light of our profoundest knowledge, or it cannot long live in company with our intelligence and conscience.

This faith has always been attended with doubt, as light is with shadow, and such doubt has increased in our day. General agnosticism has spread a mist and cloud over this hope, and multitudes view it with unconcern or doubt or positive denial. It is admitted on all sides that "there has been for years a steady ebb from the shores of another life."

Efforts have been made to subject the matter to statistics and tabulation. A few years ago the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research conducted a questionaire on the future life, and out of 3,329 replies received, only 33 per cent. felt "the question to be of urgent importance to their mental comfort," and only 22 per cent. "desired a future life whatever the conditions may be." More recently (1916), Dr. James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College, conducted a similar questionaire with about five hundred scientists and students, and the replies indicated that "the number of believers in God, in every class of persons investigated, is less, and in most instances very much less, than the number of non-believers"; and "the number of believers in immortality is some-

what larger than in a personal God." These results are disappointing and disquieting enough, but there is less value than at first appears in such statistical investigations, as Dr. Leuba's questions and replies both show that there is necessarily such vagueness in the meaning of such questions that careful thinkers are cautious about responding to them with a brief dogmatic answer.

On the other hand, the London *Daily Telegraph,* in 1904, conducted in its columns a long correspondence on the subject, and the editor summed it up in the conclusion: "I should imagine that so far as this correspondence reflects the mind of the English people, the believers must be ten or twelve times as numerous as doubters, and this, too, in an age which has evidently been too rashly styled a sceptical one."

As for the causes of this widespread doubt of immortality, they are many and complex. In many cases they are largely personal, being due to early environment and training, or to reaction therefrom, to a doubting constitutional bias and temperamental mood, and, in some instances, to a course of life unfriendly to such faith. Among the general causes of such doubt may be enumerated the scientific view of the world as mechanistic and deterministic, the evolutionary origin and animal nature of man, pantheistic and pessimistic phi-

losophy, and the commercialism of our life and the general materialistic wealth and wonder, interest and excitement of our booming modern world that absorbs men's attention and activities and draws them off from another world. And some part of the cause of varying belief on this subject must be due to the power of "the will to believe" and the equal power of the will to disbelieve, which is a factor in the final secret and sovereignty of personality. The perfect honesty and sincerity of much of this doubt ought not to be questioned.

The most prominent and cogent of these causes of doubt are the scientific, and these will be considered in the succeeding chapters of this study. But a word may be said here on pantheistic philosophy. In all its forms, whether materialistic or idealistic, pantheism obliterates personalities as raindrops and snowflakes are obliterated and absorbed in the sea. A Hindu, taking up a little water in his hand from the Ganges, said, "There is man as he now is"; and then, spilling it back into the river, he said, "There is man returning to the whence from which he came." This philosophy pervades the Orient and saturates India, where it has brought forth its proper fruits.

Any such philosophy cuts up personality by the roots, or reduces it to an illusion which only gleams

for a moment in the sunshine of consciousness and then vanishes into the night out of which it flashed. Personal existence is only a wave on the illimitable ocean or a drop thrown up in its spray, and then it relapses into the oblivion of the infinite deep. This philosophy spreads its mist widely in the world and lurks in much of the doubt that clouds our faith in immortality. The antidote for this false view of life and pessimistic disease of the spirit is the instinctive trust in and logical affirmation and intensification of our intuitive, inexpugnable sense of personality, bearing in its bosom freedom and responsibility, which is a fact of our immediate experience and more certain to a healthy mind and heart than any other fact we know. If this rock crumbles under our feet, not only our immortality but our present personality also, this world as well as the next, dissolves in the mist of evanescent appearance. The healthy soul will ever refuse to believe this, and it is so repugnant to the normal human mind and heart that pantheists themselves usually find a way of slipping back into some veiled form of belief in a personal God or gods and in personal existence hereafter.

> That each, who seems a separate whole,
> Should move his rounds, and, fusing all
> The skirts of self again, should fall
> Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
  Eternal form shall still divide
  The eternal soul from all beside,
And I shall know him when we meet.

— *Tennyson.*

## VI

### THE ATTITUDE OF SCIENCE

SCIENCE has achieved such wonderful progress and triumphs in our day that it has acquired a splendour of fame and prestige of authority that dazzle and overawe us. We walk softly in its presence, we gain confidence when we can hitch our wagon to its star, and when we find it arrayed in opposition to any opinion or faith of our own we feel that the stars are fighting against us.

What does or what can science say on the subject of immortality? Strictly speaking, it cannot say anything directly on it because it deals with phenomenal appearances and not with ultimate causes and realities. It can measure atoms and planets and analyse vegetable and animal tissues, but it cannot penetrate into their inner nature. It can weigh matter, but not spirit: it can see and measure the baby's body, but cannot seize and evaluate the baby's soul. While it deals with facts and principles that border on and run out into the spiritual and eternal, yet this region lies beyond its

domain and it cannot carry over into it the authority it has properly gained in its own field.

It is an important fact that science cannot disprove immortality. It would require as much knowledge and as full access to the reality of the other world to disprove this faith as to prove it. Science may discover facts that present difficulties and raise doubts, but beyond this it cannot go, and it still leaves unhampered room for faith. Its vision is limited to the material and temporal, and at its utmost bound of discovery it must admit that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in its philosophy.

But has not science shown that the world is a material mechanism, a universal, unbroken reign of law, that leaves no room for personality and immortality? It could not do this without contradicting our most certain intuition and experience of personality and freedom, and this it has not done and cannot do. However, mechanism and mind, law and liberty, are not mutually exclusive, but are complementary and harmonious and smoothly play into each other. Liberty is not license, and law is the steel track on which liberty can run and drive itself with utmost speed and safety. The central purpose of Lotze's monumental work, *Microcosmus,* is to " show how absolutely universal is the extent and at the same time

how completely subordinate the significance, of the mission which mechanism has to fulfil in the structure of the world." The same great thinker also bears testimony to the fact that science dare not isolate itself from and set itself against the demands of the human spirit, but must justify itself in the heart as well as in the brain. "Taking truth as a whole," he says, "we are not justified in regarding it as a mere self-centered splendor, having no necessary connection with those stirrings of the soul from which, indeed, the impulse to seek it first proceeded. On the contrary, whenever any scientific revolution has driven out old modes of thought, the new views that take their place must justify themselves by the permanent or increasing satisfaction which they are capable of affording to those spiritual demands, which cannot be put off or ignored." All truth is one and coheres in final unity and harmony, and it is just as necessary for science to get into adjustment with religion as it is for religion to get into agreement with science.

We have not yet reached the end or the most important point in this relation of science to our question. Recent science has been making startling discoveries which have uprooted and revolutionized some of its most solidly established and confidently cherished convictions. Until within a few years ago the atom

was regarded as the ultimate unit of the physical universe, an irreducible and irresolvable material reality, which was the foundation stone and final fact in the constitution of things inorganic and organic. But now the atom has been shivered as by a blow and shown to be composed of infinitely smaller bodies or electrons revolving with the speed of light, so that it is a world as complex and wonderful as the solar system itself. More startling still, the electron has been resolved into electricity or some form or mode of motion in the ether. And thus the whole solid mass of the universe has been dissolved as brute bulk into pure energy, which is something closely akin to will. It is only another step from this ethereal world into an idealistic world in which matter is a manifestation of mind, and the universe is the thought and activity of God, his eternal employment and enjoyment. Such a world, so far from being closed or unfriendly to immortality, is its connatural and congenial home.

Science is thus approaching a view of the universe that is at least open to this hope, and it is itself venturing out upon the sea of faith, for its theories leave the solid ground of the seen and launch out upon the deep of the unseen. Not only so, but science builds its whole structure on faith: for it must assume and trust preliminary fundamental principles before it can take

a step or has any ground on which to stand. "As for the strong conviction," says Huxley, "that the cosmic order is rational, and the faith that, throughout all durations, unbroken order has reigned in the universe, I not only accept it, but I am disposed to think it the most important of all truths." See how boldly he plants himself on "faith." Verily this eminent man of science and chief agnostic has become one of the prophets and shows us greater faith than is often found in Israel. If science must exercise this mystic power of the mind and heart with reference to the physical world, it cannot discourage but must greatly encourage us in using the same power with reference to the spiritual and eternal world.

Our fear of science, then, in the matter of immortality is greatly abated if not altogether banished. It turns out, not to be an enemy to this faith, but a friendly guide and helper and is a veritable prophet of the invisible and spiritual. This sympathetic aspect of modern science is confirmed by the fact that the most eminent authorities in this field have generally been and are believers in immortality. A faith that commands the assent and avowal of such distinguished scientists as Newton and Laplace and, among moderns, of Asa Gray and James D. Dwight, Charles A. Young and Alfred Russel Wallace, and of Lord Kelvin and Sir

Oliver Lodge, cannot encounter contradictions and hostility in science, but must rather meet with a friendly attitude and encouragement.

> And verily many thinkers of this age,
> Aye, many Christian teachers, half in heaven,
> Are wrong in just my sense, who understood
> Our natural world too insularly, as if
> No spiritual counterpart completed it,
> Consummating its meaning, rounding all
> To justice and perfection, line by line,
> Form by form, nothing single or alone,
> The great below clenched by the great above.
>
> — *Mrs. Browning.*

## VII

### THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE

An old objection to the immortality of the human soul is the vastness of the universe that seems to dwarf man into utter insignificance and nothingness. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" This ancient doubt has gained greatly increased weight in our modern knowledge. We have torn down the old heavens, a pitiful hut, and replaced it with the inconceivably vast and grand heavens of our present astronomy. The sun is more than a million times larger than the earth, and there are stellar monsters, such as mighty Rigel and Canopus, that are a thousand or more times larger and hotter than the sun. The earth floats around the sun as a tiny speck in the solar system, and the solar system itself is only a speck compared with the nebulae of luminous gas or of stars that fill vast tracts in the sky. The light-year, or distance travelled in a year by

light moving 183,000 miles a second, is the yardstick with which astronomers measure the heavens, and they have a still vaster yardstick called a parsec. The nearest star is four and a half light-years away, and others are at distances measured by hundreds and thousands of these immense units. The light now reaching us from many stars left them before Homer sang or the curtain rose on recorded human history. There are also globular and spiral nebulae so distant that they are thought to lie outside our galaxy and to be separate universes. These suns and systems are all moving at incredible speed, some of them at the rate of two hundred miles a second. These inconceivable masses and spaces and speeds are matched by equally inconceivable periods of time.

Imagination is overwhelmed and crushed by these magnitudes, and we stand appalled in such a universe. When we think of these " dust-like shoals of stars, the shining films of firmaments, the Nebecula nebula, looking like a bunch of ribbons disposed in a true lover's knot, that most awful nebula whirled into the shape and bearing the name of the Dumb-Bell, the Crab nebula, hanging over the infinitely remote space, a sprawling terror, every point holding millions of worlds," how can we suppose that man is of any special importance? Is he not simply an infinitesimal

speck in the protoplasm or living matter that thinly veneers or spots the surface of our planet, that is itself an infinitesimal grain of dust floating in this vast cosmos? What are all his doings but the buzzing of insects of an hour? Even this titanic world-convulsion of war —

> What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million suns?

Can we suppose that such a creature as man in such a world is immortal? Does he not take himself too seriously, with an overweening sense of self-importance that is even ridiculous and absurd, strutting about as a lord of creation when he is really only an ephemeral insect or an infinitesimal microbe of a moment?

But the force of this objection gives way under examination. After all, man is mind, or spirit, and the physical universe is only matter, and, whatever may be our philosophical view of the ultimate relation and unity of these two forms of being, they now for us in our practical world lie at wholly different levels and are of infinitely different degrees of worth. Man masters matter and uses it as his servant; and though the universe were to crush him as a reed, yet, as Pascal said, he would be a thinking reed and would thereby triumph even in his death over the universe. Man

and matter are really incommensurable, and no amount of brute matter can be put in comparison with man. "A ruddy drop of manly blood the surging sea outweighs," and "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," or than all this blazing mass of suns and systems.

Deeper still, does not man reconstruct and, in a sense, create the universe in his own conception? Does not the whole universe, as far as he knows it, exist as a system of thought in his mind? And may not this be its nature and existence in the infinite Mind? Formerly, matter was regarded as the central substantial fact, and mind was conceived as dependent on and subordinate to it. But Kant wrought the Copernican revolution of reversing this relation and putting mind in the centre as the creative cause and setting matter revolving in dependence around it. At any rate we now see that the biggest star, as Theodore Parker said, is at the little end of the telescope, the star that is looking, not the star that is being looked at. "The number of stars and the limits of space are not more astounding than it is that man should be capable of knowing such things and staking them off. When man has measured the distance and weighed the bulk of Sirius, it is more appropriate to kneel in amazement before the inscrutable mystery of his genius, the

irrepressible soaring of his soul, than to sink in despair under the swinging of those lumps of dirt in their unapproachable spheres because they are so gigantic! The appearance of the creation to man is not vaster than his perception of it. To think the world is to be superior to the world."

The greatness of the universe, then, does not dwarf and crush man into nothingness, but rather magnifies his greatness. The psalmist, having for one moment yielded to the doubt, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" instantly recovered his faith in the assurance, "For thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crowned him with glory and honour." The greater the universe is the greater God is, and the greater God is the greater is man, who is made in his image.

> The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
> Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
> But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
> The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.
>
> — *Addison.*

## VIII

### DEPENDENCE OF THE SOUL ON THE BODY

THE most powerful objection to human immortality is the dependence of the soul on the body and its apparent dissolution in death. The mutual relation of the soul and body is one of the most elusive and difficult problems of both psychology and metaphysics, though the fact is plain and is attested in our constant experience that this relation is some kind of interaction. Their mutual dependence is close and sympathetic at every point and persists through life. The soul and the body develop together and keep pace with each other at every step. Every mental state or action is accompanied with a corresponding physical action, and every physical change in the body induces a corresponding change in the mind. The soul is exquisitely sensitive to all changes in the body and goes up or down with its condition. As the body fails in old age, the soul declines with it and sometimes becomes only a vestige or reminiscence of its former self. And in death the same crisis that stills the heart

also seems to extinguish consciousness and obliterate the soul for ever. In short, we know the soul only in connection with the body, and the two seem to come into existence and to perish together.

There are artists in India that produce portraits on water by means of different kinds of dust of various colours, which they deftly sprinkle on the surface so as to form the features of the human face, and which thus compose a floating portrait of wonderful lifelikeness and beauty. But the image lasts only as long as the water is perfectly still and smooth. Any disturbance of the surface distorts the picture, and a wave sweeps it into confusion. The body of man is plainly only such an image of coloured dust floating on the surface of this agitated and often stormy world: is his soul also only the finer portion of this dust and is it also submerged and destroyed in the wave of death?

This objection appears powerful and gives us a pause; and yet strong considerations break and overcome its force. It is based upon our ignorance of a disembodied state, and we cannot rest an argument upon our ignorance, for our experience is limited to a narrow area in this world and there must be more things in existence than the heart of man has yet experienced or conceived.

There are strong grounds for thinking that the body

is only a means to the soul from which the soul can disengage itself. In fact the soul is continually shedding the body as its dead cells and waste products are flowing away from it in a steady stream and being constantly replaced, so that the body is perpetually dying and casting its dead self into the grave of nature and is recreated and resurrected as a new body many times in the course of life. If the soul can thus continually disengage itself from the body in life, may it not finally divorce itself from the flesh in death?

The great fear at this point has been that the soul may be shown to be a mere form of molecular motion in the body. But the old materialism that secreted thought from the brain as bile from the liver is gone. There is no possibility of passing, as Tyndall, himself close to being a materialist, long ago said, from the physics of the brain to the thought of the mind. The brain as a material organ is subject to all the laws of matter, including the conservation of its energy. But no unit of physical energy in passing through the brain disappears and is transformed into its equivalent in thought; and no thought of the mind is converted into any kind of physical energy. There is some kind of interaction between these two forms of reality, but it is not that of transformation by which one kind of energy passes into another, as when electricity is con-

verted into heat and heat into chemical affinity. Mind and body are mysteriously linked together, and yet they are disparate and are never transfused.

But we now come upon a deeper truth at this point. As Kant wrought the Copernican revolution of reversing the relation of matter and mind, so a similar revolution has been accomplished in the relation of body and soul. Life was formerly regarded as a form of the body, but now we are coming to see that the body is a form of life. Life moulds the body to its own shape and use in all its myriad forms from single-celled plants up through its whole scale to the highest life in man. In every seed and germ cell an invisible architect is at work building an appropriate tabernacle for its tenant, and this architect is life.

Let Huxley, with his marvellous insight and skill, show us this architect at work: "The student of nature," he says in his *Lay Sermons,* "wonders the more and is astonished the less, the more conversant he becomes with her operations; but of all the perennial miracles she offers to his inspection, perhaps the most worthy of admiration is the development of a plant or animal from the embryo. Examine the recently laid egg of some common animal, such as a salamander or a newt. It is a minute spheroid in which the best microscope will reveal nothing but a structureless sac,

inclosing a glairy fluid, holding granules in suspension. But strange possibilities lie dormant in that semifluid globule. Let a moderate supply of warmth reach its watery cradle, and the plastic matter undergoes changes so rapid and yet so steady and purposelike in their succession, that one can only compare them to those operated by a skilled modeler upon a formless lump of clay. As with an invisible trowel, the mass is divided and subdivided into smaller and smaller portions, until it is reduced to an aggregation of granules not too large to build withal the finest fabrics of the nascent organism. And, then, it is as if a delicate finger traced out the line to be occupied by the spinal column, and moulded the contour of the body; pinching up the head at one end, the tail at the other, and fashioning flank and limb into due salamandrine proportions, in so artistic a way, that, after watching the process hour by hour, one is almost involuntarily possessed by the notion, that some more subtle aid to vision than an achromatic, would show the hidden artist, with his plan before him, striving with skillful manipulation to perfect his work."

If this wonderful architectonic and teleological description applies to a lowly animal, how much more aptly does it apply to man. With equal anatomic knowledge and literary skill of description Dr. Wil-

liam Hanna Thompson, in his *Brain and Personality* and again in his *Life, Death and Immortality,* lays open the chamber of the human brain and shows us the architect of life at work. The brain is at first a soft pulpy mass, which instinct and habit and purpose begin to mould and carve into shape and use. All is wrought out according to plan and specifications. Centres of nerve cells are first roughly blocked out and then more finely shaped and finished, and a complex network of delicate filaments is spun from centre to centre, weaving the whole organ into a marvellously intricate and exquisite mechanism, quick to catch the faintest whisper or breath or stand the strain and stress of the most violent storm from the external world. Each sense, such as the eye and the ear, has its own centre, and every kind of action constructs its own special receiver and transmitter, as a receiver in a wireless station is tuned to its own peculiar waves. Language, for example, has its own centre, which by the conscious efforts of the mind in learning language is slowly shaped and tuned to that speech. When a new language is acquired, as when one whose native tongue is English learns French, a new layer of French-receiving cells is built over the old layer of English-receiving cells, so that the mind for this new use carves a new shape out of the block of the brain. And so the proc-

ess goes on through the whole body throughout all life, although as life advances in years the brain and body grow less plastic and more refractory and solidified.

Life thus moulds the body and is not its product. The soul is the unseen architect of the body, the tenant that builds its own wondrous tabernacle. The brain does not make the mind so much as the mind makes the brain. "Form," maintains a recent authoritative writer in biology (E. S. Russell in *Form and Function*), "is a manifestation of function; the essence of life is activity, not organization." "Physicians," Dr. Thompson says, "were once charged with being the most materialistic of all professional men, but they are now coming forward with discoveries about the unseen personality in us, which furnish the most convincing arguments of all against the doctrines of materialism."

The body bears all the marks of being the instrument or tool of the soul. The soul sharply distinguishes itself from the body, handles it, resists it, and especially does it master and mould it to its own use. The whole system of muscles and nerves becomes an extension of the will to do its bidding. The will has the mysterious power of releasing currents of energy in the brain that leap out through the nerves and

muscles into the world and pierce mountains and carve continents and finally impinge upon the frontiers of the universe. Feelings paint themselves on the face, flushing it red or blanching it white. At times the soul overpowers the body and strikes through its flesh with crushing force. Knowing how the mind under a great stroke of sorrow may blast and wither the body in a single night and how great joy may rejuvenate it, we are prepared for startling facts in this field. The " stigmata " of the saints, in which the mind burnt right through the body or stabbed and slashed it as with a sword, are supported by weighty evidence. No doubt excessive claims have been made for the curative power of the mind in disease, but that it is a vital factor in the matter is emphasized by medical authorities and is receiving increased attention in all quarters.

As life advances, the body loses its strength and suppleness, its responsiveness to the demands of the soul, and becomes stiff and refractory, inefficient and impotent. It degenerates into a worn-out machine, a blunted or broken tool. This crippled condition of the body is an adequate explanation of impaired mental powers in old age. May not a tool become broken or worn-out and be laid aside without impairing the skill of the worker? When a telegraph instrument

stops working the operator does not stop thinking. The first cable laid under the Atlantic after operating a few weeks suddenly ceased to transmit messages. The operators in America did not conclude that the operators in Europe had ceased to exist when that wire stopped working: they only concluded that something was wrong with the wire. So we are not to conclude that the soul has ceased to exist when it ceases to communicate through the body; the body may be simply worn out or broken and the soul may be using some other vehicle of expression. As we know that the telegraph instrument cannot come into being apart from the operator, but that the operator can exist apart from the instrument, so we know the brain cannot begin to exist apart from the mind, but we may infer that the mind can exist apart from the brain.

The soul is less and less dependent on the body as it develops its own inner resources. It starts in utter bondage to the body, literally sunk in the flesh. But as it develops it outstrips the body, and the soul rises above sense, and the spirit above the flesh. More and more, as life advances, the soul becomes self-dependent and dominant, loosed from servitude to the body and endowed with internal resources. In some instances, when the body has shrunk and withered almost to the vanishing point, the soul flames out in the greatest

intensity and power. It looks as though the soul were gradually outgrowing the body and letting go of this crutch, while it is developing wings on which to soar into a wider and freer life.

One of the difficulties of faith in immortality is the impossibility of conceiving the soul without a body and the instinctive fear we have of such a state. We know life only in the body and we are frightened at the idea of a ghost and do not want to be one. But this notion assumes that the human soul at death passes into a disembodied state, and we do not know and need not think that this is the fact. The body is a marvellous mechanism, the costly product of countless ages of toil in the process of evolution, and it is necessary to our life in this world. Let us not think it is an unessential or unimportant appendage to the soul and may be lightly cast aside. May we not rather infer that the soul will be furnished a body in the next world, or that it will weave around itself a garment and fashion an instrument that will suit its needs in its wider and richer life there, even as its fleshly body has served it here? The present body may be only a temporary tent or hut for the soul while its proper palace is being built.

This is the Christian faith. Paul viewed the present body as an "earthly tabernacle" and contrasted it with "an house not made with hands, eternal in the

heavens." "It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The soul may thus cast away "this muddy vesture of decay," because it has become an outworn garment, in order that it may weave around itself a closelier fitting, more supple and serviceable, and more splendid and beautiful robe in the eternal world.

So is myself withdrawn into my depths,
The soul retreated from the perished brain,
Whence it was wont to feel and use the world
Through these dull members, done with long ago.
Yet I myself remain; I feel myself:
And there is nothing lost. Let be, awhile!

— *Browning.*

## IX

### THE PLACE AND PURPOSE OF DEATH IN THE WORLD

WHAT is the place and purpose of death in our world? Our inherited view and first experience of death is that it is a storm of suffering and a horror of darkness, the last great enemy that crashes with a brute blow into our life and home and affections and shatters all into ruin and woe. It is regarded as an unnatural thing, an outrage upon nature, and the great penalty and pain of our sin. It is attended with these dark features in many instances, and no faith or philosophy is likely to extract its sting or do more than alleviate its sorrow.

Physical death, however, in itself is not unnatural but normal. It is not the consequence of human sin, for it reigned in the animal world millions of years before man came, and man as a member of the animal kingdom is normally mortal. Sin, however, has put the sting of fear and suffering into death and made it our last great enemy. Had sin never thrown us out of harmony with God and poisoned our life, death would

have been as natural a departure out of this world as birth is a natural entrance into it. Extract from it its poisoned dart and death is as great and blessed and beautiful as birth. It only opens the door into the next room in the many-mansioned house of our Father and is going home. Christian faith at last attains this view and victory.

There is a necessity for death in the very constitution of our human world. A race propagating itself by physical generation must have some provision for clearing each generation out of the way of the next. Physical immortality would soon crowd and clutter up the world with the living and leave no room for more. Worse still, it would clog all the streams of progress with conservatism and stagnation. Age grows conservative and crystallized, but youth is plastic and progressive and keeps seeing new visions and pushing forward into new horizons. The supremely great men, if they remained in the world, would also dominate it and beat down opposition, and they must be got out of the way to give other men and common men a chance. Death is constantly permitting birth to baptize the world with the dew of youth. Its sickle sweeps the path clear of old life that new life may go forward. It is a minister of life more abundant and beautiful. It is the architect of an ever finer and

lovelier world. It is therefore not an enemy in our world, but is an angel of God sent to bless this world, as well as to take human spirits to a better habitation.

Not only so, but death may play a part in lifting life to a higher stage in the next world. In this world lower forms of life are ever passing into and enriching higher forms, the vegetable into the animal, and the animal into man. Death on a lower level is thus a means of richer life on a higher level. May not human death in this world be the means of lifting the human spirit to a higher stage of being in the next world? As birth releases us from the narrow womb into a wider, freer world, may not death be a birth into a higher existence? Death may thus be a normal and necessary stage in the higher evolution of the human spirit.

If this view of the beneficent ministry of death seems to be contradicted and rendered absurd by all the tragedy and tears death has brought into the world, the explanation is that "the sting of death is sin." In a sinless world constituted as ours is, death would be normal and free from pain and sorrow. "It is as natural," said Bacon, "to die as to be born."

> Death is the crown of life;
> Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
> Were death denied, to live would not be life;
> Were death denied, even fools would wish to die.
> — *Young's Night Thoughts.*

## X

### THE SOUL A REALITY IN ITSELF

We are now passing from the negative to the positive side of our question, from difficulties and doubts to intimations and proofs. We must brood over the subject and let it call forth every suggestion. It is largely atmospheric and grows best in the mystic mood of meditation.

We begin our investigation as close to ourselves as possible, down on the bedrock of personal experience, as the astronomer, when he is about to cast his measuring line out among the stars, takes his stand on the ground under his feet.

The first bit of reality we indubitably know is our own soul, self or consciousness. We know this by immediate awareness or intuition. External objects are known to us through the mediation of the senses, which are of the nature of coloured lenses that impose the secondary or sensational qualities of matter upon these objects and thereby give them their sensational appearances. A change in the senses, as in the retina

of the eye or the tympanum of the ear, would thereby effect a change in the sensational nature or appearance of the object and might even transform it profoundly. Sense perception thus gives us knowledge of reality at second-hand, or knowledge that has passed through a process of transmission and transformation. Not so with our knowledge of the self. We look into our consciousness, not through senses, but directly without any transmitting and transforming medium. We are immediately aware of the self, of its states and activities, and there is no room for error or perversion in a process of transmission. The self is at once subject and object of consciousness with nothing thrust in between them, like the senses, to dim or blur the vision. Consciousness is self-consciousness, the knowing subject and the known object are identical in one and the same self.

Such knowledge is the clearest and surest we can have. Its stream is not mixed and muddied with the sediment of the senses, or perverted with their transforming processes, but it is direct vision and pure light. We thus know ourselves better than we know anything else. Here is our first knowledge of reality. It is not knowledge of a phenomenon, as is our knowledge of the external world which consists of appearances or symbolic representations of things, but our self-knowl-

edge is knowledge of the noumenon, of immediate reality, or the thing in itself. We thus have in our own self a bit of ultimate reality, and this leads us strongly toward the conclusion that we have in the soul a sample of all reality, one of the tiny bricks of which the universe is built.

Idealistic philosophy assimilates all reality to spirit, discerns in matter a manifestation of mind, finds physical forces to be living energies, and resolves the whole universe, with the signal exception of finite spirits, into the activity of the Infinite Spirit, or God. Whatever may be our view at this point, we must admit that the soul is a dynamic agent or a living energy. It would be absurd to grant to chemical affinity or gravitation a degree of reality which we deny to the active and imperial human soul.

To this dynamic agent the principle of the conservation of energy must now apply. This principle is one of the established doctrines of modern science. The manifold forms of energy we see manifested in the physical world are all mutually equivalent and are being constantly transformed into one another, but are never increased, diminished, or annihilated. Motion becomes heat, heat becomes electricity, electricity becomes chemical affinity, chemical affinity becomes light, and thus the Protean circuit runs its endless round.

But at no point in this process does any infinitesimal atom of energy drop out of the circuit and vanish into nothingness. Experiment always finds the transformed energy exactly equal to the original, and any deficiency or excess in the resulting product would be unthinkable. The mind cannot find or conceive any point in the process where any minutest unit of energy could lapse. Thus the sum total of energy in the physical universe remains a constant quantity.

The meaning of this infinitely interlaced, exquisitely balanced, self-perpetuating system of physical energies, according to philosophical conception, is that the divine activities are a unified system in which change at one point is attended with a compensating or corresponding change at other points. A divine thought can never perish and leave no trace, but abides in the eternal consciousness. God never dies or loses any part of his life.

The same principle now applies to the human soul. As it is a centre and agent of mental activity, a finite copy of God's infinite Spirit, it can change the form and direction of its activities, but its activities themselves can never cease; its spiritual energy can never be spent and vanish. It is a bit of the immortal energy of God and can never die. There is no escape from this conclusion unless we annul the principle of the

conservation of energy, which is one of the most solidly established principles of our modern scientific thought. And this law applies to the soul, even though we hold, which idealistic philosophy does not hold, that the physical energy of matter and the spiritual energy of the soul are of a different nature; for we can no more think of spiritual reality than we can of physical reality as lapsing into nothingness. We have thus at this point hitched our wagon to one of the most splendid stars of science.

But, it may be said, this law only assures the perpetuity of the spiritual principle or energy of the soul, but not its personality. The soul is immortal in its essence, but it melts back into the infinite Spirit whence it came, as raindrops, having been distilled out of the sea, fall back into its depths. This is a powerful objection to personal immortality, and it will next be considered.

## XI

### PERSONALITY: ITS NATURE, WORTH AND POWER

We now note the fact, of immense significance in this argument, that the soul, which is the first piece of reality which we indubitably know, is personal spirit, or is constituted as a personality. Personality is consciousness consisting of perceptive and reflective thought, sensibility and responsible will. We are immediately aware of these three fundamental faculties or modes of activity fused into the unity of our soul or self. We think, we feel, we will: we do these three things and we can never do more or less. In our consciousness we are always thinking and feeling and willing simultaneously. Any one of these modes may at any one moment be predominant and seem to submerge the others, but the three are always acting together, though in varying degrees and combinations.

The intellect mirrors the world in sense perception and reconstructs it in thought, draws conclusions in reasoning, sees visions in imagination and constructs

purposes and plans. Feeling suffuses the ideas of the mind with general excitement that imparts to them their interest and worth and pours a stream of motive energy upon the will. The will is the self-control of the soul by which it chooses its own ends and motives and concentrates its energy into imperial power over life and nature. All these faculties and activities constitute a unitary organism in which the whole enters into each operation and which in its totality is characterized by growth, habit, law, liberty, purpose and responsibility.

Yet this unity diverges into variety and deep distinctions. It has a varied and rich capacity of perceiving and feeling and acting on different kinds or aspects of the infinite manifold of reality. When acting on objects in their intellectual nature it has knowledge; when acting on them in their esthetic nature it has a sense of beauty; when acting on them in their ethical nature it has a sense of duty; and when acting on them in their relations to God it is exercising its sense of worship and is experiencing religion.

Personality is the supreme worth of our human world. It is a great stride forward in the process of evolution and creation, an abrupt break and difference in kind from all that went before. All theories of his rank admit that man stands at the top of the creation,

the highest and finest product of evolution. His erect form and upward looking face distinguish him among animals, and his whole physical organization, brain capacity, and mental power lift him out of their class. His moral and spiritual nature elevates him still higher, and he alone among creatures known to us is crowned with personality. This is indeed a crown that gives him sovereignty and a sceptre over creation. He captures and trains into nimble servants all the forces of nature and subdues the earth and turns its wilderness into cultivated fields and splendid cities. His soul secretes civilization, and the whole vast material structure of our human world is simply the outgrowth and extension of his personality.

In his science man reveals the rank of personality as he reaches immeasurably beyond his hands and even his eyes into the world as it recedes into the infinitely small and stretches away into the infinitely great. Through his microscope he peers down towards atoms and electrons, and through his telescope he gazes out through boundless spaces. Standing on this tiny earth he throws his net out in the star-sprinkled splendour of the night and catches suns and systems, sifts them through his fingers, and analyses them into their elements. By means of his spectroscope he seizes the nebulae, filling with their filmy substance and faint

light vast regions in the sky, and drags them into his laboratory and crushes them into his crucible and extracts from them the secret of their constitution. He turns up the rocky leaves of the globe and reads in their hieroglyphics the history of a hundred million years. He glances backward through illimitable vistas and sees suns condensing out of nebulae, and forward through far-stretching aeons and sees them cooling until their fires are extinguished and they are coffined in eternal ice. He grasps the universe in its grand law-saturated totality in which no atom ever gets out of place and no star ever shoots a forbidden ray. He relates the near to the far and the small to the great in one organism of interworking unity and exquisite sympathy from molecule to mountain and from gnat to Zodiac. He sees that every star lends a friendly ray to the rose and would not dare deny that the fragrant breath of the rose is grateful to the constellations. He knows, with Mrs. Browning, that

> No lily-muffled hum of summer bee,
> But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;
> No pebble at your feet but proves a sphere;
> No chaffinch but implies the cherubim.

And yet man's science, while more spectacular, is of subordinate value to his art and ethics, sociology and politics, education and religion. His soul blossoms

out into the glorious products of his poetry and painting, sculpture and architecture and music. He builds government and dreams of a parliament of man. He studies social problems and perils, feels the sorrows of society, and strives to construct a social order that will give every human being the opportunity and means of a decent and worthy and beautiful life. He climbs the stairway of philosophy to catch a glimpse of the Ultimate Reality, and in religion rises to his highest and best as he sees and serves the one true and living God.

Character that is true and pure, good and beautiful and blessed, has value above every other possession and power and is the supreme worth and final end to which all other things are means. This is the diamond that scratches every other stone, the inner worth that outranks and outshines all outer wealth. And character is found only in personality and is its crown.

Personality is power. It is the master force of human civilization, without which coal and iron and steam and electricity could not forge a beam or build a hut. It is this power that makes the great statesman, general, orator, thinker, poet, preacher, artist or leader in any field. It was by the force of his personality that Demosthenes swayed Athens, Cæsar mastered Rome, Paul drove the wedge of the gospel into Europe, Luther created the Reformation, Napoleon dominated

the kings of his day, and Lincoln liberated a fettered race. It was the personality of Columbus that, amidst the fears and appeals and threats of his cowardly sailors as they cried out against the terrors of the unknown sea, held the prow of his vessel ever westward, every morning keeping it in the track of the sun and every evening driving it deeper into the night. It is personality that makes great discoveries, writes great books, paints great pictures, achieves triumphs and heroisms, and carves names high on the pillar of fame. Almost every great historic achievement is the lengthened shadow of some supreme personality. Personalities are the mountain peaks of history that mark the culminating points in the range of events and lift the level of their region. And yet even the greatest personality and most splendid genius only discloses and pushes into prominence the worth that is at least lying latent in the humblest human being and even in the little child.

In our human world all things are interpreted in terms of and derive their worth from personality. Soil and shower and sunshine, mineral and vegetable and all the physical energies of nature, have their value determined by their availability for human use. The reason an acre of ground in Europe or America is worth so much more than one in Central Africa is to be

found in the human persons that live on it. Take all the people out of a rich and splendid city like New York or London and its value would vanish and become one with Nineveh and Tyre. Nothing in our human world has any worth until it is related to human use. Man's presence must be indicated in the wildest waste to give interest even to a painting.

More and more our civilization is exalting the worth of human personality from the top to the bottom of society. It is this sense of the supreme value of personality that has struck the fetters from the slave, elevated woman, and is throwing protection around the child. The worth of simple personality is being raised above ancient rights of property. It is this that is now bringing thrones and crowns crashing down in the great war that may be the last world-convulsion, in which democracy is asserting itself against despotism and personality against brute power. It is this that is dissolving and levelling special privileges and social distinctions of royalty and nobility and wealth and is flooding the world with democracy. It is this that is ringing out false pride of place and blood and ringing in the common love of good; that is ringing in the valiant man and free, the larger heart, the kindlier hand; ringing out the thousand wars of old and ringing in the thousand years of peace; ringing out

the darkness of the land and ringing in the Christ that is to be.

And so all things in our world converge and climax in the supreme rank and worth of human personality. Take man off the earth and it would fall to the level of a dead world such as we see in the moon, and even below this, for the moon has value as related to man. Of course earth and moon and all worlds must have some worth other than that due to man, but such value must be derived from their relations to some other persons or to a Person, for viewed simply as material globes their whole value vanishes.

Personality is the only adequate final explanation of the universe. We immediately know order and plan and energy only in our own intelligence and will, and then we proceed to extend and apply these inner principles to external things. We look upon human behaviour as it goes on in business, society, politics, art, literature, religion, upon the whole swarming ant hill of our human world, and we infer in these moving bodies the presence and activity of souls like our own. The whole human spectacle is meaningless until we thus interpret it, and personality instantly lights it up with this inner power and explanation. An extension of the same principle puts intelligence and will behind and within all the appearances and activities of the

universe as its inner reason and energy. We can really understand these activities only when we interpret their order and plan as the work of intelligence and their energies as the exertion of will. The universe, like our human world, is rationally understood only as we interpret it in terms of personality; and then personality becomes our ultimate explanation, which cannot be explained but must be accepted as at once the initial and the final fact of existence, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the final Mystery that gathers into itself and explains all other mysteries and in which we must rest.

## XII

### THE PERMANENCE OF PERSONALITY

Personality, being the highest product and final crown of life and of the universe, must be permanent, or all value vanishes with it. Its permanence is seen in its persistence through all earthly vicissitudes. While it develops from germinal consciousness to full-blown power, yet after emerging into selfhood it retains its central core of consciousness, which does not change with the years but remains as the identical self. Its outward circumstances are in a state of ceaseless flux and at times pass through tremendous shocks and upheavals; its very body flows away from it in a steady stream and is constantly replaced with new tissues; its subjective experience is in a state of incessant change and development, and at intervals encounters catastrophic crises and is swept by terrible storms; and yet none of these things rolls it from its base, but its central self persists as the same personality. If it can survive such constant and deep changes and even repeatedly put off the entire body and clothe itself in a

new garment of the flesh, will it not survive the still greater shock of death and weave around itself a new body adapted to its new condition?

This conclusion has been accepted and asserted by some of our ablest scientific thinkers, the class of men who find it most difficult to accept such views. "What we are claiming," says Sir Oliver Lodge in his *Science and Immortality,* "is no less than this — that, whereas it is certain that the present body cannot long exist without the soul, it is quite possible and indeed necessary for the soul to exist without the present body. We base this claim on the soul's manifest transcendence, on its genuine reality, and on the general law of the persistence of real existence. . . . Immortality is the persistence of the essential and the real; it applies to things which the universe has gained — things which, once acquired, cannot be let go."

The view of John Fiske, as set forth in his *Destiny of Man,* is also of special interest and worth: "Now the more thoroughly we comprehend that process of evolution by which things have come to be what they are, the more we are likely to feel that to deny the everlasting spiritual element in Man is to rob the whole process of its meaning. It goes far toward putting us to permanent intellectual confusion, and I do not see that any one has as yet alleged, or is ever likely

to allege, a sufficient reason for our accepting so dire a conclusion. . . . The greatest philosopher of modern times, the master and teacher of all who shall study the processes of evolution for many a day to come, holds that the conscious soul is not the product of a collocation of material particles, but is in the deepest sense a divine effluence. According to Mr. Spencer, the divine energy which is manifested throughout the knowable universe is the same energy that wells up in us as consciousness. Speaking for myself, I can see no insuperable difficulty in the notion that at some period in the evolution of Humanity this divine spark may have acquired sufficient concentration and steadiness to survive the wreck of material forms and endure forever. Such a crowning wonder seems to me no more than the fit climax to a creative work that has been ineffably beautiful and marvellous in all its myriad stages." And even Mr. Darwin was forced to confess: "Believing, as I do, that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is, it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress. To those who fully admit the immortality of the human soul, the destruction of one world will not appear so dreadful."

These views of these eminent evolutionists introduce

and already throw light upon the question, What effect does the theory of evolution have upon the hope of immortality? The popular impression appears to be that its effect is unfavourable if not fatal. The theory seems to suggest that all things come by a slow, irresistible process of development, and bloom and ripen on the vast mystic tree of life, and then inevitably drop and perish in the general stream of nature; and the depressing thought is borne in upon us, at times with powerful force, that the human soul is only the topmost and finest blossom on the tree and falls and perishes as any common leaf. But the doctrine of evolution is only a descriptive account of the successions of the phenomenal world and leaves untouched the causal power that underlies them; and this causal power, theistic philosophy holds, is the immanent intelligence and will of God, who is energizing in the world and producing all its activities and its whole development in the order of his plan and purpose. This resolves evolution into a process of the spiritual world in which souls have their congenial home, and thus relieves it of its depressing implications and sets it in a friendly attitude towards this hope.

But there is still further confirmation of this hope in the theory. Evolution throughout its whole course is a process of producing ends which then enter as means

upon a higher stage of development. The atom appears to be the product of one incomprehensibly long period of evolution, but it was no sooner produced than it was taken up into higher combinations in molecules and chemical compounds. This inorganic matter was then transmuted into organized forms of life, and throughout this long climb we see the same principle at every stage and step. The mineral is food for the vegetable, the vegetable for the animal, and the animal for man. The wheat stalk, having ripened the wheat, perishes, but the grain is gathered into the granary. The apple, having grown upon the tree, is detached from its stem and passes into higher life. The end of each stage of evolution marks a critical point where the product is cut off from the process and raised to a higher level.

The direction in which this principle points is plain: it points to a higher life for man. His soul ripens on the stem of the body and then is detached and the body perishes. But the whole analogy of evolution requires that this most precious product should not be lost, but should pass on to a higher stage and be devoted to a more exalted use, or be transmuted into finer, richer life. The long, slow, unwearied climb, purchased at every step by a great cost of sacrifice, from the ether to the atom, from the atom to the crystal, from the crys-

tal to the cell, and from the cell to man, has been struggling towards personality as its goal. Shall the atom and the crystal and the cell be on their way to a higher destiny at the lower end of the scale of evolution, and yet personality in the human soul at the top fail of this principle and hope and fall into nothingness? Were the highest end and goal thus to perish with the means, nothing would remain to justify either means or end, and the whole process of development would come to nothing and thereby be reduced to irrationality. We cannot believe that the universe is so careless and wasteful of its sacrifice and most precious product. The immense and age-long process through which God has created human souls is vindicated only as this process issues in permanent results. That personalities, the highest and costliest embodiments of worth, should be produced through the travail of divine birth only to be flung as rubbish to the void, puts to confusion all our ideas of reason and right. Evolution itself has written all over it the promise and potency of some better thing, and its long, blood-stained process is adequately completed and crowned only when the human soul, its topmost blossoms and finest fruit, passes into a higher world and an immortal life.

> But in completed man begins anew
> A tendency to God. Prognostics told

Man's near approach; so in man's self arise
August anticipations, symbols, types
Of a dim splendor ever on before
In that eternal circle life pursues.

— *Browning.*

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments.

— *Shelley.*

## XIII

### PROPHETIC ELEMENTS IN LIFE

MAN is a forward-looking being, his mind and heart are anticipative and prophetic. He is not shut up within the present, but has a far horizon and is overarched with a vast dome. He is endowed with the imperial power of creative imagination that is the advance agent of all his achievements and moulds the world as plastic stuff. His brain is an architect's studio in which are prepared plans and specifications that shape steel and stone and carve character and destiny. He dreams dreams and over his path hover ideals that coax and woo him on to larger and lovelier things. He follows the gleam of these visions, he rises to his ideals, or his ideals lay hold of him and lift him starward from the dust. It is the creative imagination that produces all the glories of literature and art and all the great achievements of men. Men of genius are eminently the children of their imagination; they see visions that unveil the beauty of the world, or that transform civilization and build a copy of the city of

God on earth, rearing its jewelled walls around our horizon and laying its golden pavements right down under our feet.

Every stage and act of life prepares the way for the next scene. All life is anticipative and expectant. Youth leads on to maturity, and maturity to later years as the morning leads to noon and evening. Education is preparation. Ploughing and planting, business adventure and investment, all plan and purpose draw their meaning and fruitage from the future. Young men are now laying down their lives in the war as a costly and splendid sacrifice which is the necessary price of liberty they will not enjoy. Their blood will be the blessing of a thousand generations yet unborn. Macaulay said that in writing his *History of England* he had his eye on the year 2000 A. D. The human soul in this earthly life is often taking long views that pass beyond the borders of time into the endless future.

This is one of the great marks of man. The animal has it not. " Not ' envisaging itself,' not being at once actor, spectator, and critic, ' living in the flashing moment,' not seeing the past and the present and the future separately, this is the highest at which we can put the consciousness of animals, and herein lies the distinction between man and animals which makes

the overwhelming difference." "The present alone and isolated," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "would be meaningless to us; we look before and after. Our memories are thronged with the past; our anticipations range over the future; and it is in the past and the future that we really live. We eat, we rest, we work, all with an eye to the immediate future. The present moment is illuminated and made significant, is controlled and dominated, by experience of the past and expectation of the future. Without any idea of the future our existence would be purely mechanical and meaningless: with too little eye to the future — a mere living from hand to mouth — it becomes monotonous and dull."

Where does this principle end? It cannot logically stop at the edge of the grave. Man's plans and activities project themselves across this break and chasm as a bridge springs from its abutment. He is ever laying "great bases for eternity," and his most advanced life-structure at death stands only "half-built against the sky." The prophetic nature of human life demands a future for its fulfilment.

It may be said, however, that death is too violent a break and deep a chasm to permit the hope of this continuity and completion. But a great and sudden change may seem to be a catastrophic break and yet not interrupt the continuity of law and life. A volcano

may silently sleep for centuries and then suddenly explode; yet the explosion was no real rupture of continuity, but was caused by the last pound of pressure that had long been slowly accumulating. The ocean tide may gradually rise against the sand dune along its shore, but at last it reaches a height where it flows over the ridge and invades the continent. A steel railway bridge over a river is of different construction from the earthen bank and stone pier from which it springs, but it carries the same track without break across the river into a new country. Death may be the rising tide of life that flows over the bank of the body, or the bridge that crosses the river into another world. It is a critical point in life, but its continuity is unbroken. Some of these prophetic elements in life will now be unfolded.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.
— *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

## XIV

### THE INSTINCT OF THE HEART

INSTINCTS are prophecies. They are hereditary constitutional tendencies and impulses which begin to act automatically when they are aroused by their proper stimulus, and they find in their environment their appropriate means of satisfaction; they express the most primary and fundamental needs of the organism and sustain the life of the individual and of the race. They are prophetic previsions and provisions in the constitution that reach forward into the future and meet with their fulfilment and gratification.

The animal world is full of instincts, and they are often marvels and mysteries that excite our astonishment and defy our explanation. The bee builds a honeycomb according to mathematical and architectural principles of a high order. Ants organize and carry on a highly complex social order involving government, officers, workers, agriculturalists, soldiers and slaves, domesticated animals and plants, that rivals man's highest political achievements. Wasps sting

spiders and caterpillars in their chief nerve centres so as to paralyse them with a skill involving anatomical and physiological knowledge which Romanes said might be justly deemed the most remarkable instinct in the world. Birds newly fledged and without previous experience make long migrations and find a more favourable clime. The golden plover, a few ounces of fat and feathers, a tiny engine with a few drops of oil for fuel, breeds in summer in Arctic North America and then drives itself in a marvellous flight of upwards of ten thousand miles and winters in Patagonia. Day and night it wings its way over this vast distance, much of it over the trackless ocean, impelled and guided by the mystery of instinct. Insect and bird and fish and all animals are thus moved by inherited impulses that find their appropriate means of satisfaction, and by this means they live and propagate their kind.

Man is also a creature of instincts, born with his nature packed full of them. Many instincts he has in common with the animals, such as act in the babe and child; others of a higher nature are peculiar to himself. Some begin to act at birth and others develop as they are needed in life; some fulfil their temporary use and then wither away, and others grow with our growth and persist to the end.

Our human instincts have their roots and springs

down in our subconsciousness. All our associations, memories, habits, instincts are stored and preserved in this hidden chamber. There is reason to think that this subconscious region is large compared with our conscious life, as seven-eights of an iceberg is submerged beneath the surface of the sea. Not only our individual experiences, but our whole accumulated heredity is deposited in this deep. We are vastly greater and more ancient that we know or dream. Our heredity runs back through all the generations to the cave man and on back through geological ages to primal cells. Our souls are stratified structures, full of fossils, like the rocky strata in the crust of the earth. There are deeply buried in us ancient submerged continents and extinct constellations of racial experience, and at times these continents push their peaks up as islands and these constellations fitfully blaze up as faint stars in our consciousness. Abnormal "multiple personalities" are also sometimes buried in these mysterious depths. This is the underground world and night life of the soul, full of shadows and ghosts and stars.

The subconsciousness plays a part of immense importance in our life. Up out of this huge cellar come swarming through its trapdoors and back stairways of memory and association the shadows of the past to

reinforce the present. Suggestion has the power of tapping this hidden reservoir and letting it gush up in jets of thought and feeling. Everything that we put into our life will sooner or later come out of our life. Long years afterward on the most unexpected occasion and in the most startling ways, " old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago " will come up out of this dark chamber to strengthen and comfort us, or, like ghosts out of their graves, to trouble us.

Up out of this great racial deep of the soul comes the instinct of immortality. This is an impulse and desire looking towards a future life, which is as old and as wide as the human race. It has all the marks of instinct: universality, constitutionality, priority to experience, and necessity in our life. In lowest savagery and highest civilization, grossest superstition and purest religion, in every age and under every sky instinct impels man to cry out of the depths of his heart for immortal life. That it exists or manifests itself in greater or less degrees in different individuals and is almost wanting in some, is quite in accordance with the moderate variability of instinct and does not invalidate the general fact of its universality.

The human spirit shrinks from extinction and has a mighty passion for life. It stands on the shore of time, peering out over the ocean of eternity that it may

discern the green or golden shore of a far, new world. This life, rich and glorious as it may be, it holds to be a poor and pitiful fragment without more life. Man buries his dead and refuses to believe that they have vanished into nothingness, but hopes to meet them again. He enters the dark shadow of death, triumphantly believing he will emerge into the eternal morning. "There are wondrous impulses in us," says W. R. Alger, "constitutional convictions prescient of futurity, like those prevising instincts in birds leading them to take preparatory flights before their migration. Eternity is the stuff of which our love, flying forward, builds its cooing nest in the eaves of the universe. If we saw wings growing out upon a young creature, we should be forced to conclude that he was intended some time to fly. It is so with man. By exploring thoughts, disciplinary sacrifices, supernal prayers, holy toils of disinterestedness, he fledges his soul's pinions, lays up treasures in heaven, and at last migrates to the attracting clime."

Instincts, as we have seen, grow out of and express the most primary and fundamental needs of life; and in nature they find their appropriate means of satisfaction. They are not lies; they are trusted and they tell the truth. The instinct of immortality, we must believe, is of the same nature. It is an expression and

outgrowth of the age-long racial need of immortality as the necessary complement and completion of our life, and if it is a true instinct it must be a part which has its counterpart that fits it as the die fits the coin. The belief that it is a true instinct is an act of faith, but it is one to which the race has long committed itself, which is altogether in accordance with the analogy and promise of nature, and to which the very universe has pledged its integrity. Can it be that the instinct of the ant and bee and bird is true and that of man is false? Will nature lead the whole world of life up the slope of instinct to higher life and then at its very summit prove a traitor to the highest and noblest instinct of all? Will God implant truth in the heart of the very insects and then inveigle his children into trust in him only to tell them lies? The human race has ever thought better of its God, however dimly and darkly it has seen his face, and it will ever trust the eternity that he has set in its heart.

Even those who doubt or deny immortality cannot altogether kill this instinctive hope in their hearts. Thomas H. Huxley, in 1883 when near sixty years of age wrote: "It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older. It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no

more than I did in 1800. I had rather be in hell." And archagnostic as he was and inventor of the name, yet some belief in a personal God and a wistful if faint hope of immortality appear in the inscription composed by his wife and placed on his tomb by his special direction:

> And if there be no meeting past the grave,
> If all is darkness, silence, yet 'tis rest;
> Be not afraid ye waiting hearts that weep,
> For God still giveth his beloved sleep,
> And if an endless sleep He wills — so best.

The heart speaks by intimation and allusion, suggestion and presentiment, and when its yearning is denied and suppressed, it finds indirect ways of whispering its secret to the soul. Agnostic literature contains many instances in which men that have denied this hope have yet let it slip out of them in some byword or chance allusion. When least expected it comes knocking at the door, and before the mind is aware of its presence it has captured the soul. This is one of the marks of its truth and power.

> Just when we are safest, there's a sunset touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
> As old and new at once as nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in the soul.

The poets are the prophets of the heart. They interpret its dreams and see its visions. They can play upon the thousand-stringed harp of the soul and draw from it its deepest chords and mellowest music; and they have ever struck upon its mystic strings the profoundest and noblest notes of immortality. The extinction of the soul does not lend itself to inspiring poetry. Atheism is not singable. But all the great poets have sung the song of immortal hope. There is no snow-capped, sun-bathed mountain peak of poetry that does not reflect this light, caught from a luminary beyond the horizon of this world. An anthology of poetry on death and immortality is a great constellation of stars. And this instinct of the heart is one of the fixed stars of the first magnitude in the firmanent of these prophets.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live forevermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

Here sits he shaping wings to fly:
His heart forebodes a mystery:
He names the name eternity.

— *Tennyson.*

Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

— *Wordsworth.*

I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first
I ask not: but unless God send his hail
Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
He guides me and the bird. In his good time!

— *Browning.*

## XV

### TRANSFORMATION AND RESURRECTION

LIFE breaks into myriad forms and fulfils itself often in strange and startling ways. It spins its fine thread in unbroken continuity through all ages and across all chasms; and it passes through many wonderful transformations and resurrections that suggest similar possibilities in human life.

The primal thread of life propagates itself without break. The simplest form of life in single-celled plants and animals multiplies by division. A single cell divides into two, and this succession continues without end, and thus in this line of descent there is no process of old age, degeneration and death, but the vital thread continues through ever-renewed youth and deathless life. The individuals of such a species existing today are simply the infinitely divided cells that originated far back in the geological morning when the first pulse of life beat on the planet. They are older than any existing mountains and continents and they will continue in unbroken line until the last pulse of life throbs on earth.

But a similar continuous thread of germinal cells runs through all the forms of life, and the individuals in the world today, of all species including man, have budded out on this continuous scarlet thread and are thus connected by a kind of immortality with their first ancestors and will hand on this deathless life to their last descendants.

Alternate generation presents wonderful facts which are strangely significant. Many of the lower plants and animals exist in one form in one generation and in the next generation in a wholly different form, returning in the third generation to the first form. The first form may be a free animal living in an external medium, and the second may be a parasite passing its whole existence within another animal, to be set free again in the next alternate generation. In many instances these successive forms were long supposed to be independent species until their strange connection was discovered. The first form seems to have perished, but its life is continued in another form and in another environment or world.

Stranger and more significant still is the phenomenon of metamorphosis. An animal begins its existence in one form and then suddenly changes into another that may bear no resemblance in organs and functions, appearance and activity, medium and mode of life

to the first form. Familiar instances are the transformation of a tadpole into a frog and of a caterpillar into a butterfly. The caterpillar is a slow-moving, shaggy creature, repulsive in appearance. It lives without change for a period and then passes into a quiescent pupa state in which a wonderful process rapidly takes place. The whole structure of the worm is torn down and rebuilt into a new creature, which then emerges as a swift-winged, gorgeously painted and splendidly bejewelled butterfly that flits and flashes about as a living flower in the wide free world of the atmosphere. The insect world is full of these metamorphoses that are among the greatest marvels and mysteries of life.

Life in all its higher forms passes through a kind of death and resurrection as it is packed away in a seed or cell and then bursts into new glory. A seed drops into the soil and perishes, but it passes on its life to a new growth that springs up in a stalk and breaks into bloom and renews all its life. Every winter buries vegetable life in a grave, which in the spring rises in a glorious resurrection. The same process in the higher animals takes place in the womb in which life retreats into the embryo and becomes a mere thread of cells and then buds anew into all the strength and beauty of youthful life.

If life finds so many cunning ways of escaping from one form to another and of slipping through dark gates into new youth and higher worlds, will not the higher and more permanent and precious form of human life pass through the transition of death and emerge in more glorious forms and a fairer world? Shall the microbe be older than the rock-ribbed mountains and still be fresh with immortal youth, and yet the thread of the human soul be snapped after a few brief years? Shall the lowly worm become the fairy butterfly, passing from one world to another, and yet man be denied this power and privilege?

We must not put too much weight on these analogies. They will seem fanciful and even false to some; and we do not claim that they are analogies in the deepest sense. But they are suggestive parables of life. The resurrection of the springtime has always been a symbol of immortal hope to men. We do not suspend our faith and argument on these significant facts, but we may weave them as a strand into our many-sided meditation on this mystery. Nature is often prophetic and is hinting at deep laws and great possibilities for us, and we do well to place our ear close to its bosom and try to catch every beat of its heart and whisper of its voice.

If the red slayer thinks he slays,
  Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

— *Emerson.*

## XVI

### THE INCOMPLETENESS OF THE SOUL

ANY unfinished structure suggests and promises that it will be carried to completion. A building half way up with work actively progressing on it, a portrait only sketched in outline, a poem that is plainly only the first rough draft,— these and all such fragments point with the finger of prophecy and promise to the completed product. God is a builder who does not stop half way in his work, and the prophetic faith of the human heart was expressed by the psalmist in the prayer, " Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me: Forsake not the work of thine own hands."

The human soul is an uncompleted structure, an outline sketch, a growth in its first stages, and its present attainment falls vastly short of its own ideal. What it is is only a hint of what it might be and what it feels it ought to be. The whole soul is a bundle of cravings and faculties, powers and possibilities, physical and mental and spiritual, that are all more or less plastic and germinal. Some of these, such as the procreative

passion, do fulfil their purpose, reach their full satisfaction, and are then sloughed off, evolution leaving them behind as withered husks. But others of them reach no such limit and are like parabolic curves which never become a closed circuit, but ever sweep a wider area.

Our mental faculties are of this infinite nature. They unfold their tentacles and throw them wider and farther, laying hold of the world with an ever ampler grasp, feeling deeper into its crevices, penetrating to its core and reaching out to the stars, but never approach a limit to their inquiries and processes and powers, or to their capacities of growth, and never attain full and final satisfaction. Every question the mind solves only discloses a hundred others that are not solved, and thus its conscious ignorance grows faster than its knowledge. The wider is the circle of its light, the vaster is the surrounding rim of darkness that shuts it in. Newton himself realized that he had only picked up a few pebbles on the shore of the infinite ocean of truth, and this visible shore has vastly increased its breadth and extended its sweep since his day. The human mind, immense and splendid as are its present achievements, has only made a beginning. It has innate power to press indefinitely beyond its present boundaries and launch out upon unknown

deeps and fathom unknown depths. It believes there is no fact or far corner, no infinitesimal atom or solar monster, no deepest and darkest mystery in the universe it cannot understand if it can only get its eyes and fingers on it. It feels that a million million years would not exhaust its powers and possibilities and demands eternal school days for its development and satisfaction. The infinitude of truth is a further assurance that the human intellect will never lose its occupation through finding no more worlds to conquer. It thus has eternity stamped upon its constitution as something that can never finish its work and be cast aside as a means that has reached its end. Against the rim of the unknown it ever beats as an imprisoned bird against the bars of its cage. It believes it was made to know and has an instinctive faith that God will yet remove the bars and let it know.

In a still deeper way the human heart is only a bud and a beginning. Its affectional nature has in it the seeds of immortality as it never outgrows its power of loving and its craving for social satisfaction, and clings to its fond object more firmly and tenderly as it approaches the verge of earthly life. The love that binds hearts together in kinship and friendship does not exhaust itself, but grows stronger and sweeter, until it is more precious than life itself. It looks beyond the

grave and passionately longs for reunion and completion on the other side. To cut this love off and not crown it with endless love would be a fatal imperfection and cruel disappointment in the plan of life.

The moral nature has the same parabolic powers as it starts problems and experiences that never reach their solution and goal in this life, but ever run forward and throw themselves unsolved and unsatisfied into another world. So strong is the demand of conscience, or the "categorical imperative," for a future life as the necessary fulfilment of its needs that Immanuel Kant rested on it as a sufficient foundation for belief in immortality. And the human will does not become a spent force with time, but persists in its plans and ambitions and passions and often puts forth its greatest projects and intensest efforts and energy in the last hours of life.

The body reaches the limit of its growth and efficiency and shrinks to the point of its dissolution, but the soul in its intellect and sensibility and will is bounded by no such limit and has the capacity of endless development and enlargement. It is only in the bud and beginning of its achievements and triumphs even in this life. "All this world," writes H. G. Wells, "is heavy with the promise of greater things, and a day will come, a day in the unending succession

of days, when beings, beings who are now latent in our thoughts and hidden in our loins, shall stand upon this earth as one stands upon a footstool, and shall laugh and reach out their hands amidst the stars."

The whole soul is thus a prophecy and promise of eternal life, and if this be not fulfilled the world is false in its very constitution and core. "If we are utterly to die with the ceasing of breath," says W. R. Alger, "then there is an amazing want of symmetry between our endowments and our opportunity; our attainments are most superfluously superior to our destiny. Can it be that an earth house of six feet is to imprison forever the intellect of a La Place, whose telescopic eye, piercing the unfenced fields of immensity, systematized more worlds than there are grains of dust in this globe? — the heart of a Borromeo, whose seraphic love expanded to the limits of sympathetic being? — the soul of a Wycliffe, whose undaunted will, in faithful consecration to duty, faced the fires of martyrdom and never blenched? — the genius of a Shakespeare, whose imagination exhausted worlds and then invented new? There is a vast incongruity between our faculties and the scope given them here. On all it sees below the soul reads 'Inadequate,' and rises dissatisfied from every feast, craving, with divine hunger and thirst, the ambrosia and

nectar of a fetterless and immortal world. Were we fated to perish at the goal of threescore, God would have harmonized our powers with our lot. He would never have set such magnificent conceptions over against such poor possibilities, nor have kindled so insatiable an ambition for so trivial a prize of — dust to dust." If these powers and possibilities are not to be fulfilled, then "the soul's proud faculties tell glorious lies as thick as stars?"

> Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
> What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
> Verdict which accumulates
> From lengthening scroll of human fates,
> Voice of earth to earth returned,
> Prayers of saints that inly burned —
> Saying, "What is excellent
> As God lives is permanent;
> Hearts are dust, hearts' love remain;
> Hearts' love will meet thee again."
>
> — *Emerson.*

## XVII

### THE INCOMPLETENESS OF THE WORLD

THE incompleteness of the human soul is matched by the incompleteness of the world, which affords a further confirmation of our faith in immortality. From every point of view this is an unfinished world and bears the marks of being a preparatory institution. It is a workshop in which products are roughly shaped out but not finished, a field in which buds are grown but not fruits ripened, a school in which scholars are taken through primary grades but not graduated. There is a call for a finishing factory, a harvest field, a higher school and a final home. Man is never complete in this world because this world cannot complete him; and thus this world by its very nature begins work which only another world can finish.

Especially is the world incomplete and disjointed in its moral and social aspects. Its frightful inequalities and injustices, vice and crime, call for adjustment and judgment. Here the strong oppress the weak, the wicked tempt and contaminate the innocent, "truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,"

corruption proudly sits in high places and scornfully defies justice, social inequalities unjustly exalt some to ill-gotten wealth and ease and luxury and license and trample others down into bitter poverty and wrong, crime and vice defy all law and order and decency and soak and saturate the social fabric with incredible corruption and frightful forms of iniquity; and war at times ploughs up the foundations of society in a world-convulsion, fills the earth and air and sea and depths under the sea with explosives and poisonous gas, "blind furies slinging flames," and thus stabs and gashes the world into one great red wound; and sin has turned the whole of human history into one long tragedy of blood and tears. Conscience cries out against such a world as a final settlement of human affairs, and, if it can be trusted to tell the truth, there must be another world in which all wrongs are made right. If the whole fabric of our moral life is not an illusion and delusion, but the reality and tragedy we believe it to be, it must issue in a final assize in which retribution and rewards are justly distributed. God is a God of truth and justice and will bring every work into judgment, and judgment has not yet had its day. "There must be another world, where the remunerating processes interiorly begun here shall be openly consummated. Can it be that Christ and Herod, Paul and

Nero, Timour and Fénelon, drop through the blind trap of death into precisely the same condition of unwaking sleep? Not if there be a God!" "If Death gives a final discharge," says Dr. Martineau, "alike to the sinner and the saint, we are warranted in saying that Conscience has told more lies than it has ever called to their account."

We are not blind to the fact that justice and judgment are often executed in this world and that, as Ruskin says, "every day is a day of judgment and irrevocably writes its verdict in the flames of the west." This world is not all a welter of injustice and wrong, for, were it so, it could not survive but would destroy itself in chaos and dissolution. Yet it is so far out of joint that if we must face it as a moral finality it turns to irrationality, and it can be understood and justified only as we believe that

> behind the dim unknown,
> Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

## XVIII

### THE VOICE OF RELIGION

RELIGION is one of the widest, deepest, and most powerful and permanent facts in the world. Professor Alfred Marshall opens his great work on *Economics* with the statement that "the two great forming agencies of the world's history have been the religious and the economic. Here and there the ardour of the military or the artistic spirit has been for a while predominant: but religious and economic influences have nowhere been displaced from the front rank even for a time; and they have nearly always been more important than all others put together." Religion is not a superstition that is waning and withering in the light of our modern knowledge, but it is a constitutional principle in humanity which grows with all human growth and comes to its highest and purest forms and greatest worth in our highest civilization and culture. Through all ages and in all lands the whole earth has been one great altar from which has risen from humanity the worship of God.

The deepest feeling of humanity is its sense of dependence on God, and its greatest need and most urgent cry was voiced by Augustine: "O God, thou hast made us for thyself, and we cannot rest until we rest in thee." In his experience man finds a personal God in prayer and worship, fellowship and obedience. He seeks him by a primal instinct and impulse which drives him to God as hunger and thirst drive him to food and water. He speaks to him with the confidence of a child to a father and pours out his soul to him. He confesses to him his open faults and secret sins and beseeches him for pardon, purity and peace. He looks for indications of God's guidance and follows the gleam. "Thou wilt light my candle." He catches from God visions of right and goodness, ideals of perfection, of duty, of service and sacrifice, of battles to be fought against hosts of darkness, and of a kingdom of truth and right, brotherhood and love, to be built; and he girds himself up for the battle and throws himself into service and pours out of his heart the last drop of devotion and sacrifice. His very sorrows only drive him closer to the throne of grace as he falls on the great world's altar stairs which slope through darkness up to God.

This worldwide, powerful fact of religion is a witness to immortality: for a dominant note in its faith

and worship is the hope of eternal life. It is true that in the pantheistic religions of India the cry is for the final extinction and oblivion of life and not for its personal continuance; but this perverted and pessimistic form of religion has sprung out of a diseased race consciousness that is largely the product of a suffering-soaked, sin-saturated clotted mass of human beings. A healthier-minded consciousness has pervaded general humanity. It is further true that faith in immortality is not absolutely essential to some degree of religion. Humanity in its dependence exists and God exists and there would be ground for the relation of worship between them though immortality did not give it the pledge of endless life. Yet religion without this faith would be deprived of the element of eternal value and would thereby fall to an infinitely lower level. The chief strand would be removed from the tie that binds man to God and the power of religion over his life would be immeasurably weakened.

In all worthy forms of religion from the lowest to the highest, this faith has been a clear and steady flame, a fixed polar star. It glimmers in increasing clearness through the Old Testament, and, in the New, life and immortality are brought out of twilight into the full day and splendour of the teaching of Christ

and his apostles. All Christian prayer and praise, faith and fellowship, service and sacrifice are shot through with this hope, and heaven is the completion and crown of the Christian life. Destroy this faith and Christian worship would wither into silence, and the whole temple of religion would begin to crumble. The Bible would be closed, every missionary would return, and the Christian pulpit would have nothing to say on the mystery and darkness of death. Whatever truth and worth there is in religion, if it is not all a lie, is pledged to this hope.

> Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
> Thou madest man, he knows not why,
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And thou hast made him: thou art just.
>
> —*Tennyson.*

## XIX

### THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

THE Fatherhood of God is a strong ground of trust in this hope. Christian revelation and theistic philosophy teach that human souls are the offspring of God and bear his image and are bound up in fellowship with him. Men are thus the children of God, and he sustains to them the paternal relation, and they to him the filial relation. This mutual relation involves mutual obligations and fellowship and faithfulness. In begetting human souls God has passed the point of producing mere things or even partial selves such as we may see in the higher animals, and has brought forth children that are capable of sharing his life and love. Such children, having been begotten, are thenceforth essential elements in the divine life and are, in a degree, necessary to its completeness and satisfaction. "The Father seeketh such to worship him." God having brought forth his children can never be the same without them. They are not mere means to higher ends, but are ends in themselves with inherent and essential life and worth. They are objects of the

Father's eternal love and have their home in his heart. Such a relation is a timeless one and reaches no temporal limit, but runs on, growing richer and sweeter forever. For his own sake the Father will not cast his children to the void.

And the children never can be complete and satisfied without the Father. Without him they are waifs in a fatherless world, infants crying in the night and with no father to hear their cry. God himself has implanted this childhood in them. Will he not be faithful to his own work? To suppose that he is begetting children and endowing them with these capacities and hopes only to disappoint them is to suppose that he is making cruel sport of his children and is a fateful monster more dreadful than we could believe any human father or demon could be. "Who can believe," says Martineau, "that the everlasting Mind fulfils its end by disappointing every other? . . . Is the eternal design of Perfection to be gained by the frustrated aspirations of countless ephemeral generations?" "Will the affectionate God," writes Alger, "permit the ox-hoof of annihilation to tread in these sparrow-nests of humanity so snugly ensconced in the fields of being? Love watches to preserve life. It were Moloch, not the universal Father, that would crush into death these multitudes of loving souls supplicating him for life, dash

into silent fragments these miraculous personal harps of a thousand strings, each capable of vibrating a celestial melody of praise and bliss." The universal human heart thinks better of God and trusts his promise as implanted in its own constitution.

Father, perfect my trust;
Let my spirit feel in death
That her feet are firmly set
On the rock of a living faith.

## XX

### THE PRAGMATIC VALUE OF BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

WHAT is the effect and value of belief in immortality in practical life? Does it make any difference? And is any difference it makes good or bad? To this pragmatic test must this question come.

There are extreme views on both sides. Dr. James H. Leuba, in his recent book on *The Belief in God and Immortality* in which he reports his statistical questionaire already referred to, says outright that this belief is not good but bad in its effects. "The modern belief in immortality," he says, "costs more than it is worth. . . . Its disappearance from among the most civilized nations would be, on the whole, a gain." "It would be difficult to evaluate the harm done to humanity in the past by the conviction that the real destination of man is the world to come. . . . I may add that the atmosphere of doubt surrounding the Christian beliefs with which we are concerned, co-existing as it does with creeds that affirm their truth and with a worship that implies it, creates in the upper in-

tellectual circles of the churches and more particularly among professors and students of theology a situation threatening the most precious possession of teachers and students: their intellectual integrity." Of course this is only his personal opinion, and it counts for one.

Dr. Leuba in his statistical tables divides his psychologists into "the more distinguished" and "the less distinguished." It is not invidious, then, to pit the judgment of a "more distinguished" psychologist against that of this "less distinguished" one. Dr. G. Stanley Hall, in his recent work on *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology,* says: "Every degree, even the slightest, of increased faith in a future eternal life of rewards and punishments for the soul gives inestimable support to morality." And again: "No one who knows the human heart can have patience with those who, because there are a few pure and lofty souls that can live out the best within them without the aid of hope or fear for the future, argue that more harm than good was done by these immense powers to stimulate righteousness and repress evil." In setting forth his own faith, which is a form of Ritschlianism, he further says: "For the ethical psychologist the place or state of future weal or woe based on rewards and penalties is not a question of objective reality but of subjective need, and because he cannot doubt the lat-

ter he holds with regard to these beliefs a Kantian view that they do truly exist, since the practical reason is higher than the theoretical. If the latter doubts, the former, which is a higher tribunal, affirms, their unassailable reality for the will, and in this form they should be preached from the pulpit in new and stronger terms." As regards the psychologists we are content to let the matter rest with these statements.

The opposite extreme from this is the averment that without this faith there could be no worth and virtue in human life at all. Religion and morality and all decency would disappear with it and we would all plunge into the ditch. Some religious thinkers and writers have boldly gone to this extreme. But nature is too orthodox to permit this. She has laws which she executes and on the lowest levels of human life maintains a necessary degree of morality. The Ten Commandments of Moses did not originate in principle with him, but go back to the cave man. Many utter agnostics as to immortality exhibit fine character and lead noble lives, and if this faith were generally lost the world would go on.

But would it go on the same? This is the question. We cannot think it would. The loss of this faith from our life would sooner or later change our whole view of the value of life. It would at once cut off the great

vision and motive of the future world and confine it to the near horizon and short time of this world. All thoughts and feelings and motives springing from the permanent value of life and its eternal reward and retribution would cease to influence us, and we would think and act as only the creatures of a day. The majestic front of eternity would vanish and leave only ephemeral time. Our life could scarcely rise higher than eating and drinking to sustain the flesh which would presently become dust. We could not hide from ourselves the fact that we are only animals and differ from them only in consisting in a little finer clay and richer blood. There would be in us no vital difference in kind from the beasts of the jungle and the insects of a summer evening. Our pride may cry out against this view, but its logic is inescapable.

It is doubtless true that the general loss of this faith would not immediately produce any great moral disaster or even noticeable difference, for it takes time for some causes to work out their effects. The swift express train continues its motion for some time after the steam has been shut off in the locomotive, carried forward by its own momentum. But presently it slows down and finally stops. Disease may not show serious symptoms at first and it may take a long time to develop, but it ends in death. Human society would

continue its course with little change for a time, if it were to lose this faith. But let time do its work and this unfaith bring forth its proper fruit, let the momentum of the old morality be spent, saturate society for ten generations or a thousand years with the belief that death ends all, and who shall say there will be no serious results, even social disaster and disintegration? There can be little doubt that the tendency of unbelief in this doctrine, or of a positive belief that death is the end of life, is towards practical materialism. The gospel of this view of life is, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. However a few souls of fine fibre and heroic temper would resist this tendency, yet this is its logic, and it has no high motive and permanent value with which to oppose it. Men will soon minimize and disregard consequences when they believe that all consequences will soon be over. The judgment of Emerson, who cannot be suspected of any undue leaning towards orthodoxy, is of peculiar weight on this point: "No sooner do we try to get rid of the idea of Immortality — than Pessimism raises its head. . . . Human griefs seem little worth assuaging; human happiness too paltry (at the best) to be worth increasing. The whole moral world is reduced to a point. Good and evil, right and wrong, become infinitesimal, ephemeral matters. The affections die

away — die of their own conscious feebleness and uselessness. A moral paralysis creeps over us." And Ernest Renan said: "The day in which the belief in an after life shall vanish from the earth will witness a terrific moral and spiritual decadence. Some of us perhaps might do without it, provided only that others hold it fast. But there is no lever capable of raising an entire people if once they have lost their faith in the immortality of the soul."

On the other hand, the belief in immortality has the general voice of human experience and the course of history to bear witness to its value and necessity. This testimony finds a voice in practically all religion and religions, it is cut on innumerable monuments under every sky, it is written in all the bibles of the world, and it is expressed in universal literature and art. The prophets, priests, apostles, and martyrs of humanity have proclaimed it and even sealed it with their blood. Men have died for it. And countless millions have been sustained by it through temptations, trials, sorrows, through all the tragedies and blood and tears of this world and have died triumphantly in its hope. Literally this faith in multitudes of believers has abolished all fear of death and turned this last great enemy into an angel of light to bear them home.

Definite instances of the effect of this belief can be

given, cases that comply with all the conditions of scientific experiment and test. The following remarkable instance is given by Rev. Dr. Charles L. Slattery in his book on *The Gift of Immortality:* "The late F. W. Myers, through interest in psychic research, became convinced, in what he thought a scientific way, that life goes on after death. It was not with him a hope, a trust, a faith; it was what he believed to be full evidence tested by the senses. With the manner by which he gained this assurance I now have nothing to do. You may think that he was grossly self-deceived. All I insist upon is that you grant that in Myers you have an example of a man who had suddenly awakened to a genuine conviction of immortality. Now, what difference did this conviction make? Let his friend William James give the answer: 'Myers's character . . . grew stronger in every particular. . . . Brought up on literature and sentiment, something of a courtier, passionate, disdainful, and impatient naturally, he was made over again from the day when he took up psychical research seriously. He became learned in science, circumspect, democratic in sympathy, endlessly patient, and above all, happy. The fortitude of his last hours touched the heroic, so completely were the atrocious sufferings of his body cast into insignificance by his interest in the cause he lived for. When a

man's pursuit gradually makes his face grow handsome, you may be sure it is a worthy one. . . . Myers kept growing ever handsomer and stronger-looking.' This is an illustration of what must happen to every man when, for one reason or another, he passes from no faith, or a conventional faith, in immortality, into a robust and vital faith. It makes a difference in life."

One other instance we adduce from Dr. Slattery: "Of modern biographies there is not a more inspiring life than that of Louis Pasteur. His biographer says plainly that Pasteur was constantly mindful of immortality. 'Absorbed as he was,' is the record, 'in his daily task, he yet carried in himself a constant aspiration towards the Ideal, a deep conviction of the reality of the Infinite and a trustful acquiescence in the mystery of the universe.' Again the biographer writes, 'Absolute faith in God and in eternity, and a conviction that the power for good given to us in this world will be continued beyond it, were feelings which pervaded his whole life.' And at the end the biographer relates that it seemed as if 'Pasteur already saw those dead ones who, like him, had preserved absolute faith in the Future Life.'"

We may say, with the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jeph-

thah; of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth. And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

Dr. Slattery sums up and concludes his chapter on the responsibility that immortality lays on the individual in the following striking passage: "Immortality throws upon the individual at least four commanding responsibilities: the responsibility to be master of himself in all temptations; the responsibility

to be courageous in all the hard places of experience; the responsibility to detach himself from the mere things of life; and the responsibility to buckle to himself a task so great that only eternity is long enough to complete it. If he fulfils these responsibilities he has already passed from death into the endless life. He already stands firmly in the high and beautiful country of immortality."

"Where there is no vision the people perish." Seen at a distance the main range of the Rocky Mountains is a glorious sight. The planet is wrinkled into those giant billows of rock that rise above the sea level at some points three miles high. Their sides and summits are flecked with the foam of unsullied snow, splendid white visions with their bases buried in the molten heart of the globe and their peaks plunged into the sun. The sight gives one a sense of power and grandeur, majesty and mystery that almost impels one to break forth in a shout.

And yet the question arises, What use is that mountain range? No grain of wheat or blade of grass ever grows up there and no foot ever treads those icy heights. Cubic miles of rock and billions of tons of snow are heaved up in those ridges against the sky: why all this waste? There is no waste, but great use in many ways. He who built all things knew what

he was doing in pushing up those summits and planting them on their immovable foundations. They are the storehouses of life. All summer long those vast snowdrifts spin themselves into slender rills, which dissolve into iridescent mists and weave exquisite rainbow-coloured bridal veils around waterfalls and gather into rushing roaring cataracts and rivers and flow out over the plains in irrigating streams. Those snowy summits fling far and wide meadows and orchards and wheatfields, towns and cities, turning deserts into gardens and peopling them with multitudes. Denver is a daughter of those snows. Vast populations suckle life from those immaculate breasts. Not only so, but those rocky ribs of the earth play a great part in the life of the continent, determining the course of winds and rivers, reaching up with their giant icy hands and squeezing the moisture out of the clouds from the Pacific and pouring it as rain upon distant plains and breathing their fresh vitalizing air over the whole land. Level those barren heights and cities would perish and the Mississippi Valley would in large part become a desert. Everything in nature is beautiful in its time, and those gigantic ridges, that we may have thought useless, are the shining hills of God whence he sends down streams of life upon the earth.

The spiritual verities and eternities of the world

are such mountain heights. To dim worldly vision they may seem cold and barren, yielding no fruit or profit and tempting only visionary eyes and foolish feet. But they are the mountains of God, the mother of all high and fine life and beauty and blessedness, the fountain of streams that are for the healing of the nations and the satisfaction of the deepest thirst of the human soul, and that cause the earth to grow green and the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Immortality is one of these majestic heights. Some eyes are so dim or blind that they fail to see any such shining summit and may think, seriously and sadly, or lightly and frivolously, that it is all a cloudland mist or subjective illusion. But faith sees it and lives under its spell and drinks of its streams and finds in its refreshing water life more abundant, sweeter and richer and pulsing with eternal hope. Faith sees it as it sees all the great and beautiful and blessed things of life.

Tried by the pragmatic test, whether applied by the psychologist, scientist, or prophet or Christian believer, our faith in immortality stands justified. Without its vision the highest and finest life would perish.

## XXI

### TWO WORLDS AT A TIME

When Thoreau was interrogated as to the other world he replied, "One world at a time, Sir." Whatever he meant by this saying, it has been expanded into a subtle piece of scepticism. The saying now runs, "One world at a time, if you please, and this world first."

In so far as this saying may be a protest against excessive "other worldiness," it may be justified. The impression is sometimes entertained that the religious man is living exclusively in and for the next world. He stands gazing into the sky and loses sight of this world, an impractical visionary. And there have been religious dreamers and fanatics who have given point and sting to this charge. They have separated themselves from this world and lived aloof from it, absorbed in cultivating a subjective isolation, monastic in spirit if not in form. This, however, is not the true spirit of the religious life, which, while it does look for a city which hath foundations, eternal in the heavens,

and lives under the spell of its presence, yet is also deeply rooted in this world and is alive and alert in all its interests and activities.

The point of the saying, however, is quite otherwise than a protest against excessive interest in another world. It is intended to cut out all other worlds and confine our life strictly to this world. The suggestion is that we are not sure of any other world and that we had better lay hold of the one we have. We may be living in a fool's paradise in looking for another world; let us make the most of this world, hug it close and squeeze it hard, as we would press all the juice out of an orange, and not run the risk of losing this world in the vain hope of gaining another. The suggestion looks reasonable. It is plausible and even fascinating and at times we may be tempted to try it. Paul himself felt the force of the logic of this view when he declared that "If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable."

There is, however, one thing wrong with this view: it is not true. It is not possible for us to live in one world at a time. If we take the saying in the most literal form, it is not possible to live on this earth alone. Suppose this world were cut off from all other worlds as by some vast impervious shell: what would become of this world? This world would die as though struck

by a universal blast of lightning or crushed by a cosmic collision. It is the blue sky that keeps the grass green; it is the sun shining above us that makes the earth blossom around us. It takes the whole solar system to grow a single grain of wheat or blade of grass. And it takes all the worlds in the sky to grow a human soul. Our spirits are too great for this little world; they do not have breathing space and elbow room in it, but are stiflingly "cabined, cribbed, confined."

There are circumstances and times when men discover and know that they cannot live in one world at a time. The sailor knows this. He cannot steer his ship by the twinkling lights along the shore, but he finds another world, a fixed star that he can trust to guide him. And there are other times at sea when men find they cannot live in one world at a time. Those fifteen hundred people that knelt on the sinking deck of the *Titanic* and sent their prayers up to the strains of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," they did not think they could live in one world at a time. And those thirty men, of whom we read, who for four hours stood crowded together in a frail boat knee-deep in ice-water, and at frequent intervals repeated in unison the Lord's prayer — and no doubt some of them were worldly men — not one of them thought he could live in one world that awful night.

Take the other world away and this world would lose its value and shrink into comparative insignificance; all things would go down in the market: not an acre of ground or a steel beam would be worth as much, and human life would become very cheap. Shut this world up within itself and it is simply a great globe of rock; it is even only a big ball of mud in which human beings wallow; human life is hardly worth while and is no longer respectable. But give us the other world, swathe this world in the blue sky of the infinite and throw over it the starry galaxy of eternity; show us the Father's face and give us a glimpse of the eternal city: and then everything goes up in the market of this world; human life is touched with eternal issues and acquires infinite value. All the mysteries and sorrows, trials and tragedies of this world can be borne as the blood of the battle that will win an eternal victory.

The implication that we can take only one world at a time is fallacious and false. The man of religious faith has both worlds. The foot of his ladder rests on this earth, but its top leans against the stars. He lives "soberly, righteously, godly in this present world," but he also "looks for that blessed hope." He is a citizen of this world, but it is also true that his "citizenship is in heaven." This world and the next

world are not mutually competitive, exclusive and antagonistic, they do not stand in each other's way and crowd each other out, but they are mutually complementary and harmonious. They work together and complete and crown each other. Either without the other is a fragment, incomplete and largely meaningless; it takes both to form the full-orbed sphere of life.

The whole universe is a unit, as the very word means, a single organism in which no part can do without the other parts, but in which all the elements are laced together by delicate exquisite cords of relationship that knit them into common sympathy and service. Gravitation binds all the worlds together in a unity so finely balanced and sensitively adjusted that the fall of a grain of sand on this earth sends a shock through the universe and jars the most distant star. More pervasive than gravitation, stronger than steel cables and more etherial than electric currents are the connections that bind this world to the next. They play into each other like the cogwheels in a machine, or like connected telegraph or telephone offices, or like the fine sympathy and fellowship of mutual friendships. The other world is the grand goal and inspiration of this world. It lifts up this lowly earth and sets it among the stars of eternity. It makes every day

and deed, however humble and hard, or trivial and evanescent, big with infinite worth and eternal destiny. It crowns this world with glory and honour, whereas the denial of the other world leaves this world without permanent worth and brands it as " an insane sandheap " or crazy ant hill.

Faith in the immortal life, then, is not unfriendly to this life. The ill-concealed sneer and sarcastic sting of the saying, " One world at a time, if you please, and this world first," is an unfounded and even foolish fallacy. It is blind to the present value and overshadowing importance of the next world and is equally blind to the real interests of this world. Under pretext of making sure of this world, it will lose both worlds. We do not sacrifice or impair, or disparage or despise this world in living in and for the next world, but we thereby immeasurably lift up and enrich this world. It is the man of this world that loses it. The man of the next world is also emphatically a man of this world. He is deeply interested and active in its affairs. He appreciates and enjoys the beauty of nature, green grass and blue sky, bird song and flower blossom. He is enterprising and energetic in business, pushing it along every line. He is interested in science, literature and art, education and religion, civics and the social order, in national and international wel-

fare, in a redeemed and unified world which is the kingdom of God on earth. He is an optimist. He believes this is God's world, not only because of what it is to-day, but chiefly because of what he believes it will be to-morrow. He sees one increasing purpose running through the ages and sees the world sweeping through the shadow of the globe into the younger day and spinning through the grooves of time on towards that one, far-off, divine event to which the whole creation moves. He does this because of, and he would not do it without, his faith in the immortal life and the eternal city.

> Two worlds are ours: 'tis only sin
> Forbids us to descry
> The mystic heaven and earth within,
> Plain as the sea and sky.
>
> — *Keble.*

## XXII

### THE SPECIAL WORTH OF GREAT SOULS

THE course of this argument applies to all human souls as beings of essential worth; but it impresses us most vividly in the case of extraordinary souls. Greatness brings out inner principles in accumulated power. We are scarcely aware of gravitation in a mote floating in the air, or in a grain of sand, but it becomes tremendous in the pressure of a mountain on its base, or in the pull of the moon or sun on the earth; and we can see more of the sun's splendour reflected in a diamond than in a common bit of glass or in a pebble. Life seems of small worth in a microbe, but it mounts up into immense value in man. Human souls also differ in rank and worth, and a great soul may overtop a crowd of small ones as a mountain overshadows its foothills. All the arguments that converge upon the hope of immortality grow more weighty and impressive as a soul looms upon us in greater magnitude and nobility. We may not have the insight to see that the meanest slave or lowest savage has in

him a germ of immortal worth; but when mighty men stride across the stage of the world and achieve works of supreme genius, or put forth deeds that reshape the ages, or win crowns of sublime heroism, or rise to summits of lofty character, or wear the blood-red robes of sacrificial service and suffering and martyrdom, we have a powerful conviction that these souls are of immeasurable worth and were not born to die. Socrates and Plato, Milton and Shakespeare, Cromwell and Lincoln, are too great and precious, we feel, to be extinguished as meteors in the night, and we are satisfied only as we are assured that they are set as stars in the firmament of eternity. These arguments for immortality support their claims to endless life, but they also support these arguments.

"I do not know," says Dr. James Martineau, "that there is anything in nature (unless indeed it be the reputed blotting-out of suns in the stellar heavens) which can be compared in wastefulness with the extinction of great minds; their gathered resources, their matured skill, their luminous insight, their unfailing tact, are not like instincts that can be handed down; they are absolutely personal and inalienable; grand conditions of future power, unavailable for the race, and perfect for an ulterior growth of the individual. If that growth is not to be, the most brilliant genius bursts

and vanishes as a firework in the night. A mind of balanced and finished faculties is a production at once of infinite delicacy and of most enduring constitution; lodged in a fast perishing organism, it is like a perfect set of astronomical instruments, misplaced in an observatory shaken by earthquakes or caving in with decay. The lenses are true, the mirrors without speck, the movements smooth, the micrometer exact; what shall the Master do but save the precious system, refined with so much care, and build for it a new house that shall be founded on a rock."

## XXIII

### THE SWAN SONG OF A GREAT SINGER

A GREAT singer recently passed out of the storm and wreck of the great war into the infinite calm and peace. Edouard de Reszke was the younger of the two Polish brothers, Jean and Edouard, who became distinguished opera singers. Edouard was born in Poland in 1856 and became a brilliant star as a baritone singer, famous in St. Petersburg and Paris, London and New York. He shed the sweetness and power of his melody over two continents and ministered to the artistic education and enjoyment of the world.

The war caught him in his castle of Erietrikov in Russian Poland. Presently its destructive tides rolled around its walls and utterly wrecked it, leaving him alone and solitary in its ruins. He clung to the heap of stones and found shelter in it as in a cave. A Russian writer, Ivan Narodny, gives an account of his last days: "In that dark, damp cellar Edouard de Reszke died slowly, day by day, during two frightful years — the most miserable, lingering death possible to

conceive. But we now know that the great and loved basso remained a majestic human figure to the last — far greater and more majestic than any classic stage character he ever impersonated. During the last weeks of his lingering agony he was visited by a Russian army surgeon, who was too late to do more than to slightly alleviate de Reszke's final sufferings, but in time to secure and preserve scraps of the dying man's writings and literally to listen to his 'Swan Song.'"

Dr. Makaroff, the Russian surgeon, in his account of his visit to de Reszke, says: "On the dusty and torn walls were shreds of the splendid paintings and tapestries. All the furniture was smashed to splinters, in heaps on the floor. From the windows and shell holes in the walls I could see a fine view of the lonely fields. In the left corner of the larger room there was erected a stage of the torn brick and boards, overlooking the castle yard, the desolate battlegrounds and soldiers' graveyard. At this moment my host entered, nodding mutely. 'Here I sing to the winds and clouds,' he began slowly. 'Once every day, when the sun is setting over the silent battle fields, I climb this lonely stage and sing my improvised songs of agony. There is no audience to listen to me, except the owls and the hungry dogs. Just now I feel the haunting melody of Moussorgsky in my ears.' He walked to

the rickety stage, his aristocratic figure like that of a high priest turned to the setting sun, and in a low and impressive voice he began and sang his song."

Dr. Makaroff found in the ruins of the castle some scraps of paper on which de Reszke had written his last thoughts and among these were the following: "I feel the end of the melody. It is the hunger of the body and the hunger of the soul. I am chained to this tomb of silence. The night is so silent, and death is silent. We speak so much. We do not need ninety-nine per cent. of the words that we use. If we would think more and speak less we would accomplish everything. With materialism came talking, and with talking came the fiasco. My God! When will all this end? I will be gone when the word comes, 'Peace upon earth.' Why has no composer written the song, the hymn of peace? We have composed songs, we have sung songs only to make money and gain the ease of life. We have deserved what we have. I am worn out by past suffering. I can endure it no longer. Death? It is only a transition period to another existence. To die for a reason, for an ideal, is all right. I have found the solution. It's in the silence after the song. It is the echo of the song. Good night, humanity!"

And so the great singer "found the solution" of all

this turmoil and trial and tragedy. "It's in the silence after the song. It is the echo of the song." And is this not the only rational and satisfying solution? Shall the great artist be endowed with the rich rare wealth of musical genius only that his song for a brief moment may pass out upon the troubled air of this world and perish forever? Shall all the splendid gifts of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael after fitfully fascinating this world burst and vanish as iridescent bubbles? Has the choir of the universe no permanent place for Edouard de Reszke and Jenny Lind? Shall the walls of eternity have no frescoes from the hands of Michelangelo and Fra Angelica? Is artistic genius so cheap a product that it can be spilled into the grave and buried forever? Doubts may disturb our minds at such questions, but our hearts rise up and declare that they have felt and do trust a better prophecy.

Think ye the notes of holy song
  On Milton's tuneful ear have died?
Think ye that Raphael's angel throng
  Have vanished from his side?

Oh, no! We live our life again;
  Or warmly touched or coldly dim
The pictures of the past remain —
  Man's work shall follow him.

## XXIV

### SOCRATES

Out of a death-cell in a prison in ancient Athens a voice has floated across all these centuries and is speaking still. It is a quiet voice, self-controlled and calm, and full of peace and hope in the tragic presence of death. Socrates was a teacher. His method was to ask apparently simple and easy and innocent questions, but these proved sharp as a sword to puncture the bubbles of ignorance and conceit and pride of boastful sophists. He was in prison under sentence of death. The charge was heresy, and the method of death was a cup of poison offered by the jailer and placed to his lips by his own hand. The charge and the mode of death are mere accessories, long since passed away, in the scene, of which the majestic person of the philosopher is the central and abiding figure. He towered up over the pigmy men that brought petty charges of heresy against him in his day, and, while they are utterly forgotten, he now looms up as one of the master teachers of the world.

Plato gives an account of the last days of Socrates in

his Apology and his Phaedo. In the Apology, which is the defence against the charges Socrates made to the Athenians, his reflections on death disclose uncertainty as to the immortal life, whereas in the Phaedo he argues for this life with confidence. If death is an eternal sleep, he maintains, "death will be an unspeakable gain; for eternity is then only a single night." "But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this?" He then proceeds to depict the joys of meeting and conversing with Hesiod and Homer and other Greek worthies. "What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions? For in that world they do not put a man to death for this; certainly not. For besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said is true." He concludes with the announcement: "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways — I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

In the Phaedo we have Plato's report of the last meeting of Socrates with his friends on the day on which, towards evening, he drank the fatal hemlock. The immortality of the soul is the subject of prolonged discussion in which the arguments for and

against it are reviewed. The Platonic doctrine of the reminiscence of ideas, which must go back to a state of pre-existence of the soul, is adduced. The old difficulty of the dependence of the soul on the body is examined, and Socrates maintains that the soul commands, the body serves. One of the friends brings forward the objection that the soul is related to the body as the music is to the harp, but Socrates holds that a harmony is an effect, whereas the soul is not an effect; a harmony follows, whereas the soul leads. Socrates again reverts to the doctrine of ideas and holds that if these ideas are granted the immortality of the soul follows. It is further adduced by Socrates that life and death are opposites, and that the soul, of which life is the inseparable attribute, excludes death. The doctrine of retribution is then introduced and Socrates goes off on a long description of the future world with its rewards and punishments according to the mythology of his day.

"I do not mean," concludes the philosopher, "to affirm that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true — a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of

the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the soul in her own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth — in these arrayed she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her time comes."

The last scene is unspeakably pathetic. Socrates bids farewell to his wife and children and dismisses them, and then prepares for the fatal cup. His friends break out into weeping, but he remains calm and admonishes them to "Be quiet and have patience." He walked around in the cell until his legs grew heavy with the poison and then lay down and closed his eyes and presently was still. "Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all the men whom I have ever known."

Both the Apology and the Phaedo contain passages of such lofty sublimity and profound pathos that, after

the lapse of twenty-three centuries, they are still read by many eyes that are wet with tears. Some of the arguments used by Socrates were peculiar to the philosophy and religion of his age, but others of them are of permanent value, and some of his words are strikingly like some of the expressions of Paul. "Plato's arguments," says Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, "for immortality, isolated, modernized, may be feeble, even valueless, but allowed to stand where and as he himself puts them, they have an altogether different worth. The ratiocinative parts of the Phaedo thrown into syllogism may be easily demolished by a hostile logician; but in the dialogue as a whole there is a subtle spirit and cumulative force which logic can neither seize nor answer."

The personality of the philosopher, however, was more than his arguments; his soul was greater than his science, and his life than his logic. We feel that a great spirit went out from this world when he closed his eyelids in that last sleep. Did it vanish into everlasting night, or wake up in the eternal morning? Is the universe so prodigally wasteful of its precious things that it could cast his soul as rubbish to the void? Our hearts reject and rebel against such a suggestion, and again we feel that the universe must be a friendly and safe place for such a spirit.

Plato closes his Republic and his picture of the future life with these words: "Wherefore my counsel is, that we hold fast to the heavenly way and follow after justice and virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in the games who go around to gather gifts, we receive our reward. And it shall be well with us both in this life and in the pilgrimage of a thousand years which we have been reciting."

> It must be so — Plato, thou reasonest well!
> Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality?
> 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us.
>
> — *Addison.*

## XXV

### CHRIST

THE principle of the special worth of great souls comes to its highest expression and power in Christ. He wrought a work and achieved greatness of character that are supreme and unapproachable among men. As he now stands before us, set in the vast framework of the centuries, he is a lofty and sublime figure and shines the Master of the world. He has breathed his spirit through the ages and reshaped all their institutions; he laid his spell upon the centuries and they have acknowledged his sway and arranged themselves around him as their attractive centre and organizing power. Christendom today, however, partially and imperfectly as yet, is stamped with his image and superscription. It dates its calendar from his birth and weighs all its institutions, laws, literature, and life in his balances. His sayings are the seeds of our modern world, and more and more will they spread and bloom on every shore.

The character of Christ is the one flawless diamond of human history. All moral and spiritual elements

are refined and compacted in him in perfection. Truth and trust, purity and patience and peace, righteousness and reverence, justice and generosity, meekness and manliness, gentleness and might, goodness and love, sympathy and service and sacrifice combine in him in faultless proportion and harmony, and shine out in purest splendour. He walked the earth the Friend of all classes and conditions of men and drew to himself the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the noble and the degraded, the sinful and suffering and sorrowing. He bore the mysterious burden of the sin of the world, and his love for men paid the last full measure of its devotion on the Cross. That Cross is the centre and summit of earth's tragedy, and is at once the deepest wound inflicted by human sin and the means of its cure. The character of Christ is incomparably the most precious possession of the human race.

All our arguments for immortality converge upon him as in a focus and there blaze and burn in their greatest intensity and power. These arguments prove his immortality, but much more does he prove these arguments. If that great Soul and white Spirit vanished in the night of death and left only a handful of dust under the Syrian stars, then we feel that we live in an irrational world which devours its noblest chil-

dren and betrays all its promises. "Is God blowing soap-bubbles? Did he dip the pipe of his power in the suds of matter and blow the character of Jesus, that it might entertain him with its iridescence, burst to his satisfaction and be gone?" The human mind and heart will ever refuse to believe in such a wreck of reason and of hope.

Christ brought life and immortality to light in his teaching. Ancient philosophers indulged in speculations and raised hopes as to the other world, but Christ made positive affirmations. He spoke as an eyewitness who had come from the other world and testified that he had seen. "In my Father's house," he said, "are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "Jesus, knowing that he came forth from God and goeth unto God." The passage between this world and the next was a familiar road to him. He was a traveller returned from the other world, which was his eternal home, and he spoke of it with the same certainty as he did of this world. Heaven was as sure and real to him as earth.

These teachings of Christ were confirmed by the great seal of his resurrection from the dead. This

fact stands solidly rooted in history and is buttressed by many proofs. He himself predicted it, though his disciples failed to grasp his meaning and had no thought of a resurrection. Bewildered and scattered by the catastrophe of his crucifixion, they thought that all was over. They were in no state of mind to imagine or invent or even to believe in his resurrection and regarded as "idle tales" the reports that he was risen. But physical proofs that he was indeed risen overcame their scepticism and transformed them into mighty men, inspired with marvellous faith and zeal and armed with supernormal energy and power in preaching the crucified yet risen Christ. The witnesses to the event were numerous, competent and trustworthy. They at first had no motive to deceive and told the truth at the peril of persecution and death. Paul, a Roman citizen and Hebrew university graduate and lawyer, a man of logical mind and legal training and masterly ability, one of the great men of all time, himself a bloody persecutor of the new faith in the risen Christ, was converted to the faith he sought to destroy soon after the resurrection. After three years spent in retirement and meditation he went up to Jerusalem and spent two weeks with the disciples, investigating and examining the circumstances and witnesses of the event, and then he gave to the ages his

solemn testimony to its historic reality. The belief of this fact was the foundation of the Christian church and is to this day the cornerstone of historic Christianity.

In the resurrection of Christ we have a demonstration of the other world and the immortal life. His empty tomb is an open door through which the next world pours a flood of light into this world. To those who believe in this fact and stand in its illumination immortality has passed from the region of shadowy speculation and hope into light and knowledge. In Christ all the scattered dim rays of instinct and reason and faith converge to their focus and become a burning and shining light.

I gather up the scattered rays
Of wisdom in the early days,—
Faint gleams and broken, like the light
Of meteors in a Northern night,
Betraying to the darkling earth
The unseen sun which gave them birth;
I listen to the sibyl's chant,
The voice of priest and hierophant;
I know what Indian Kreshna saith,
And what of life and what of death
The demon taught to Socrates,
And what, beneath his garden trees
Slow-pacing, with a dream-like tread,
The solemn-thoughted Plato said;
Nor lack I tokens, great or small,

Of God's clear light in each and all,
While holding with more dear regard
Than scroll of heathen seer or bard
The starry pages, promise-lit,
With Christ's evangel overwrit,
Thy miracle of life and death,
O Holy One of Nazareth.

— *Whittier.*

## XXVI

### ARE THERE INTERWORLD COMMUNICATIONS?

HAVE any voices reached us from the other world? The belief in communications from departed spirits is very ancient and primitive and once filled the world. But such belief has long since shrunk in civilized lands, and in educated circles has been superseded by general doubt and common denial. Shakespeare has made us familiar with "the undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveler returns," and Robert Ingersoll, standing by the coffin of his dead brother, gave eloquent but pathetic expression to the same view. "Life," he said, "is a journey between the cold silent peaks of two eternities over which no message has ever floated from the other side. Stand we ever so close to the edge of the grave, listen we ever so intently, we cannot hear the whisper of a voice or the rustle of a wing."

A question, however, of such ancient lineage and persistent appeal and compelling interest cannot be suppressed or quieted, but will ever raise its head and

make itself heard. Great prejudice has become associated with it because of the mass of superstition and mercenary deception and fraud that have attended it. The whole subject of spirit communications is notorious for its impostures and jugglery which have deluded countless dupes and victims. Nevertheless, the question whether some reality lies behind all these manifestations remains and should be investigated. Men of science and educated people generally were slow to look into the matter because of its disreputable associations, but this attitude could not always continue. The truth-seeker must ever say, "I am a man, and nothing pertaining to man is foreign to me."

Within recent times the subject has been brought within the field of scientific investigation. The serious consideration of it dates from the organization of The Society for Psychical Research, founded in Cambridge, England, in 1882. Many eminent men have been connected with this organization. Among its presidents have been Professor Henry Sidgwick, Professor Balfour Stewart, Arthur J. Balfour, Professor William James, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Richet, and Professor W. F. Barrett, all names that indicate high standing in science and philosophy. Other eminent men connected with it have been Alfred Russel Wallace, F. W. H. Myers, Richard Hodgson,

W. F. Stead, and Andrew Lang. At the head of The American Society for Psychical Research, an offshoot of the English society, is Professor James H. Hyslop, and other noted American students of the subject are Henry Holt, Booth Tarkington and H. Addison Bruce.

The aim of these societies is to apply the most thorough scientific investigation and tests to such subjects as hypnotism and trance, telepathy, ghosts and apparitions, and especially to alleged spirit communications of all kinds. They have carried on an immense amount of inquiry, examined hundreds of cases in many lands, and published a large literature, including many volumes of reports. They have given out little as established results, but as early as 1884 the English society felt justified in affirming: "Our society claims to have proved the reality of thought-transference — of the transmission of thoughts, feelings, and images from one mind to another by no recognized channel of sense."

This is not the place to give an extended account of this work or to attempt to estimate its worth, but several general remarks may be made.

This subject is a legitimate one for scientific inquiry. It falls within the field of human experience and belongs to science and psychology, and therefore it is subject to the same means and rules of investiga-

tion as other fields of experience. And the intense practical interest and importance of the subject make such inquiry pressing and imperative.

No question can be raised against the competency, honesty and sincerity of these investigators. Their mere names, so well-known and eminent, stamp them as men of conspicuous ability and of high logical training and skill. Their only motive is the sincere desire to know the truth. They have no preformed theories on the subject to support, and they have endeavoured to prosecute their inquiries with caution and candour, fairness and impartiality.

No general denial can be logically entered against the possibility of communications from departed spirits. Neither physical science nor psychology nor religion has any ground on which, or any interest for which, to make such a denial. To enter a general negative on this subject is utterly unscientific. It is to decide a question before it has been examined and the evidence heard. It would require enormous and practically omniscient knowledge to affirm that such communications cannot take place. The most that any one can affirm is that to his mind no such communications have been proved. Huxley said that the question of miracles was one of simple historical fact and could not be decided by any general principle, and this ques-

tion is a parallel case. The universe is too vast and mysterious and contains too much unexplored ground for us with our finite minds and limited experience to close the door against such communications. It will ever contain infinitely more things than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

The charge that all such alleged communications consist of trickeries and trivialities calls for discrimination. This charge does lie against commercial spiritualism. The whole business of mercenary mediums is a mass and mess of fraud and frivolous inventions, and every one should be warned against their wiles. Much harm has been done, especially to people of nervous temperament, by these impostors. But the investigations and results of the psychical researchers are of a different stamp. They are conducted with honest intentions and rigorous methods and are worthy of respect. Even the charge that all these alleged communications are trivialities does not hold, for some of them are remarkable and impressive and do not seem unworthy. There are many false miracles, but these do not annul the genuine ones; and the fraud connected with mercenary spiritualism does not invalidate any truth that may be in these psychical phenomena.

As to this truth, let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. These investigators have undoubtedly

brought to light facts that are abnormal and mysterious and may mean much. They are, however, far from being agreed as to the explanation of these facts. Some of them, like Mr. Myers, Mr. Hodgson, Sir Oliver Lodge and Professor Hyslop, have been fully and finally convinced of the reality of communications from departed spirits; others of them, like Professor James, have been convinced of supernormal or inexplicable facts, but have remained unconvinced as to their being spirit communications; and still other students, like Mr. Bruce, explain them by telepathy or other abnormal psychology; and other eminent scientific men, like Professor Edward Clodd, deny and flout the whole possibility of interworld communication.

The late Professor N. S. Shaler, of Harvard University, whose writings, especially his *The Individual: Study of Life and Death,* show him to have been one of our profoundest, calmest and most judicious scientific thinkers, says on this subject: "The only direct evidence that can claim scientific inquiry, which goes to show the persistence of the individual after death, is that afforded by the so-called occult phenomena; by the alleged appearance of spirits, or the communication with what appear to some inquirers to be the minds of the departed. Notwithstanding their urgent disinclination to meddle with or be meddled by the problems

of spiritualism, the men of science have a natural interest in the inquiries of the few true observers who are dredging in that turbid sea. Trusting to the evident scientific faithfulness of these hardy explorers, it appears evident that they have brought up from that deep sea certain facts which, though shadowed by doubt, indicate persistence of the individual consciousness after death. It has, moreover, to be confessed that these few, and as yet imperfect, observations are fortified by the fact that through all the ages of his contact with Nature man has firmly held to the notion that the world was peopled with disembodied individualities which could appeal to his own intelligence. Such a conviction is itself worth something, though it be little; supported by any critical evidence it becomes of much value. Thus we may fairly conjecture that we may be on the verge of something like a demonstration that the individual consciousness does survive the death of the body by which it was nurtured."

The author has had no personal experience of such communications and is not convinced of their reality; but he sees no ground on which to close the door against them. We know only in part, an infinitesimal part, and the little circle of our light impinges on a vast rim of outlying darkness. We may well believe that we yet have undeveloped powers which in the fu-

ture may lead to discoveries as marvellous to us now, could they be revealed to us, as our present wonders would have been to our ancient ancestors, could they have foreseen them. Wireless communications alone should make us cautious in setting bounds to our powers, whether physical or spiritual. Christian faith surely has no interest in denying spirit communications, but should rather welcome them, if they were authenticated. Such a revelation and confirmation of the great hope would undoubtedly bring profound relief and comfort to many minds.

Our faith in immortality does not rest on the foundation of these alleged interworld communications Leslie Stephen said that he would rather trust "the majestic doubt of our natural hope of immortality than these ghostly voices," and not a few would sympathize with him in this sentiment. The natural hope, which is grounded in the constitution of man as being related to a larger world so that the human spirit is ensphered in eternity, retains its assurance, and we also have a more sure word of prophecy in all the teachings and testimonies of Scripture, sealed by the character and affirmation and resurrection of Christ. And yet who shall say that more light may not yet break forth to illumine and confirm the great hope?

## XXVII

### SUBSTITUTES FOR IMMORTALITY

Every good thing has its substitutes, adulterations, counterfeits. Every truth has its corresponding error as every light casts its own shadow. The human soul, when any of its powers are denied their proper outlet and are dammed up within, force a channel out through some other way. Impulses and instincts, when suppressed and perverted, find strange and cunning though it may be pitiful and impotent ways of expression and relief. The heart can in some degree transfer its desires and hopes from genuine to artificial objects and cherish and nurse make-believe affection and satisfaction.

The instinct of immortality is too powerful and persistent to be easily suppressed and uprooted. Seldom do men in their sorest doubts and saddest sincerity give this hope a blank denial, but they wrap up their unbelief in some semblance of hope and comfort. Such unfaith is all unsweet and this bitter pill must be sugar-coated. Yet the semblance is too thin to hide the ugly fact that such substitutes are after all only

an utter denial of this faith. What are some of these substitutes?

First, we are offered the immortality of earthly influence. Personal existence at death bursts as a bubble, but the memory of the bubble continues to float and glitter in the history and consciousness of the world, and thus its influence remains. The classical expression of this form of immortality is the familiar poem of George Eliot:

> Oh may I join the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence: live
> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
> For miserable aims that end with self,
> In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
> And with their mild persistence urge man's search
> To vaster issues. So to live is heaven.

This is good poetry, but it is poor comfort and offers little incentive. Of course it contains an important truth, as all these substitutes do. The eminent men and women whose souls are like stars and dwell apart in the firmament of fame do continue to illumine and inspire the world. Homer is still reading his poems, and Plato is still teaching in his Academy, and Socrates is still puncturing the ignorance and conceit of men with his persistent questioning. Shake-

speare is forever pouring the splendours of his imagination over all our world, and Tennyson is still giving a voice to our grief and doubt and faith. Luther is still shaking the world with his hammer strokes on the door of his Wittenberg church, and Lincoln is still uttering his Gettysburg Address. The greatest part of England is in the tombs of her great sons; and the same is true of America and of every great nation. At this very hour the Allies could not win the battle for freedom if they were not pushed forward by the mighty momentum of the past and led and inspired by the great leaders of other days. Cromwell and Nelson, Washington and Lincoln, Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant are even now risen in spirit from their graves and are fighting in the fields of France.

There is an immortality of influence, and it is one of the greatest possessions and powers of the world. Some measure of this immortality is inherited by every one, for no one is so poor as not to leave some little name or memory to the world. It is by this earthly immortality that the world accumulates the achievements of all its gifted sons and daughters and heaps up glittering piles of splendid deeds that are its greatest wealth. These mighty ones do rule us from their urns and stir our hearts with better impulses, and the world would be immeasurably impoverished if this

accumulated wealth were blotted out or these stars in our firmament were to fade into night.

Yet let us not think that this is the immortality of the human soul, and it is only by a figure of speech that we call it immortality at all. In fact, all of these substitutes raise the question of propriety in the use of language. Should not some other term be used to express these views? The soul itself, according to this view, perishes absolutely and leaves no trace of conscious memory and permanent worth behind; and even the poor immortality of influence will in time fade out and pass into nothingness as though it had never been. The outcome of this faith is precisely the same for the soul itself as its instant and final extinction in death, and therefore it fulfils none of the conditions of true immortality.

Another closely allied substitute for immortality is the final perfection of the race. The race is evolving towards a higher stage of development, both for individuals and for the social order, and this will at last attain, it is said, a degree of perfection in which all our ideals will be realized. Our mental and emotional and social impulses and aspirations will be permitted to reach their climax and will then slowly decline and wither away. Premature death will be eradicated, disease and accidents and wars will be prevented, and

human life will be enabled to run its full course and will then die as naturally as it was born. The very desire for immortality will atrophy as the soul slakes its thirst for life in the waters of this world and has no appetite for more. Death will not then be a cutting short of the undeveloped capacities and unfulfilled instincts and hopes of this life, but will mark the point of the soul's saturation, and will then be as natural and welcome as birth.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall, in his *Jesus in the Light of Psychology,* expresses and apparently adopts this view when he says: "The desire for immortality, therefore, is at bottom the best possible indication that man as he exists to-day is only the beginning of what he is to be, the pigmoid or embryo of his true self. When he has completed and finished all that is now only begun in him, many transcendental structures will become useless. Thus doctrines of another life, whatever else they are, we may still regard as symbols or tropes in mythic terms of the true superman as he will be and the great hope that so many have lived and died in will be fulfilled, every jot and tittle of it. The death-bed visions of those who have died hungering for more life will come true."

The race is moving forward with practically unlimited time in view, and there is no telling what un-

dreamed-of perfection it may attain. But, while admitting this element of truth in this substitute, yet again we must deny that it is personal immortality at all, for it leaves us without any satisfaction of our hopes and without any permanent worth to our personality. The race, however perfect it may become in the distant future, must vanish when the conditions of human life have passed away on this planet and leave no vestige of memory and worth. The final outcome of this faith is precisely the same as instant extinction and eternal oblivion.

A third substitute for immortality is more subtle and plausible. It is the theory of absorption in God. Human spirits pass into him as snowflakes melt into the sea. It is claimed that the accumulated worth of our earthly existence is thus conserved in the richer life of God, who is thus receiving into himself the successive generations of his children. They abide in him as essential worth, while the temporary form of personality has lapsed and the skirts of the individual are once more fused in the general whole.

There is an element of truth in this theory also. Already we live and move and have our being in God, and in the eternal state we may pass into more intimate union with him. We can never get outside of God, and in the state of final fellowship we may be included

in his life in a kind of social consciousness or fellowship. The Christian view is that our lives shall be hid with Christ in God. Yet in this state our own personality is not absorbed in God but retains its consciousness and individuality.

> Eternal form shall still divide
> The eternal soul from all beside.

This substitute appears to offer us more than does the immortality of influence and of the race, but it does this in appearance only. The final fact is that personality is lost and the soul is reabsorbed in God. This faith is plainly a form of pantheism and is subject to all the objections that lie against that form of philosophy. Such a termination of our personality is not only unjust to us, but how can it be just in God to swallow up all the worth finite personalities have so painfully gained and keep it to himself? Is God devouring his own children simply to enrich his own life? And can moral worth be thus transferred? Personality is an absolutely individual possession and cannot be passed over to another person.

The outcome of all these substitutes is that no real immortality is attained. The soul vanishes and is just the same as though it had never been. The universe has climbed the infinitely long, slow, and costly spiral of evolution only to burst at the top into a wonderful

bloom which then quickly withers and leaves nothing whatever to show for the process and the cost. The world has laboured in infinite travail and brought forth nothing. Such a result puts all our ideas and reason to confusion. Let any one of these substitutes react back upon our life and it will work out all the disastrous consequences of absolute disbelief in any immortality. These substitutes make a promise of hope to the ear and break it to the heart. If these views be true, then we must exclaim in bitterness of spirit with Matthew Arnold:

> For the world, which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help from pain;
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.

## XXVIII

### DISCIPLINE AND IMMORTALITY

WHAT place does discipline have in our doctrine of immortality? It enters into the process by which the soul is developed and made worthy of higher life. Temptation, trial and sorrow are elements in the environment out of which great souls grow. However these things in their roots are intertwined with sin as their cause, yet when rightly resisted and borne they are the means of strong and rich character. The human spirit never thrives well in constant warmth and sunshine. Cold and storm have a part to play in developing the deep roots and tough fibre of strong souls. The greenhouse with its artificial heat and protection rears tender blooms that quickly wither, but oaks grow out in the open and are cradled in hardship and rocked by storms. The world is thickest with difficulties and dangers, disease and disaster, and it is the mastering of these that makes men. A world all upholstered with safety and softness and luxurious ease would not make vertebrate souls. Temptation tries and develops men in courage and might and en-

ables them to mount on the steps of victorious deeds to the crown of mastery. Jesus came out of the temptation in the wilderness a stronger man and Saviour than he was when he went in.

Sorrow chastens the human spirit into beauty that cannot otherwise be attained. It may be the mother of faith, submission, and peace. Pearls are the product of the suffering of the shellfish, and out of its agony the human soul secretes some of its finest gems of character. Tears are great teachers; their bitter, briny drops may be transmuted into telescopic lenses that enable us to see things beyond the horizon of our earthly vision. We do not see the things of time and eternity in their right light until we see them through our tears. Great souls nearly always wear crowns that have been fashioned in the fires of great sorrows; and those that have escaped this severe discipline usually exhibit some lack of character. The music of the world would be robbed of much of its finest beauty and greatly impoverished if its minor notes were stricken from its chords. "If I could make you suffer two years," said an eminent teacher to one of his pupils, "you would be the greatest contralto in the world." The electric current becomes a glow of light, not as it slips with unhindered ease and smoothness along the wire, but only when it encounters the re-

sistance of friction in the filament in the lamp. Paul's spirit blazed up in glory when it struck the thorn in his flesh, and even the Son of God was made perfect through suffering so that his cross became his noblest crown. We cannot reach this high prize through any easier process.

> Only the prism's obstruction shows aright
> The secret of the sunbeam, breaks its light
> Into the jeweled bow from blankest white;
> So may a glory from defect arise.
>
> — *Browning.*

Masterful faith in God is not attained until we can exclaim, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Often must the outer things of life perish in flames of loss and sorrow that the inner spirit may be renewed and chastened into perfection. God causes all things to work together for our good and transmutes pain into peace, suffering into submission, ashes into beauty, and a spirit of heaviness into a garment of praise. Discipline thus prepares the human spirit for its great destiny. The soul rises on the stepping stones of its dead self to higher things.

One summer evening a little company of us were descending a steep mountain road from the Wetterhorn in the Alps, when suddenly music came floating around us from some unseen source. It was pure

impersonal music, so distilled that no sediment of sound was left to blur the exquisite harmony. It was clearer than any piano note, finer than any strain of violin, more resonant than any peal of bells, richer than any organ swell, sweeter than any human voice. We listened to hear whence it came. The mountain of rock rose above us half a mile high and at the top was splintered into crags. The music came from that mighty wall of stone. The whole mountain seemed full of it, pulsing and throbbing with its burden of song. Again and again it pealed forth like a mighty cathedral bell the volume of harmony, so full, so grandly sweet, so all-encompassing that the atmosphere for miles around seemed pregnant with the glory. The notes swept up the mountain side from ledge to ledge, leaping and ringing out clearer and finer from the higher crags; lingering in silvery echoes among the loftiest peaks; fading into enchanting whispers and dying away in solemn silence.

What did it mean? Farther down the road we came upon a mountaineer with his Alpine horn, a big wooden instrument, ten feet long, the flaring end of which fitted into a box that opened out like a hopper. He blew a blast for us, but it was only a loud raucous noise that was far from pleasing to the ear. Yet it was that rude horn, blown by that rough mountaineer

far down in the valley, that was making that celestial music up among the summits of the Alps. The majestic mountain with its heart full of melody gathered up those rough sounds and transformed and transfigured them into harmonies so divine.

So may the life on earth be transfigured into the life in heaven. The instruments on which we play may be rude and clumsy, the sounds we make may often seem rasping and discordant, we may be shut in far down in the valley, all the conditions of our life may seem narrow and its service hard, but when these experiences are caught up into the celestial world they may be transformed into such music as will make our heaven for ever.

This hope makes life worth living and glorifies every common day and deed. Even now we may begin to weave these notes of Christian character and service into triumphant chords and songs that will make all our days a chorus of joy. Already the strings of life may begin to tremble and swell with celestial strains. Let us be faithful down in the earthly valley, and at last up on the celestial mountain summit we shall touch the golden harp of perfect character and join in the song of eternal joy.

> Had he not turned us in his hand, and thrust
> Our high things low and shook our hills as dust,

We had not been this splendor, and our wrong
An everlasting music for the song
Of earth and heaven.

## XXIX

### THE WAR AND IMMORTALITY

How can we believe in immortality in the midst of this war, rocking the world to its foundations? Is not all faith in the worth of this life as well as all hope of a future life and even faith in God himself being swallowed up in this common cataclysm of all things?

One way to test this question is to go to the trenches and listen to what the men are saying there. Testimonies come to us from many witnesses that faith in God and in immortality is there a deep and abiding reality. It is not always on the surface of light talk and humorous play that are intended to gloss over the ever-present tragedy and make it possible for men to live, but none the less it is there and it finds many voices.

Major Charles W. Gordon (Ralph Connor) has recently returned from an experience of two years in the trenches in France and he declares in his public addresses that he had never found a man there that even questioned immortality. He also testifies that his own faith in God has been deepened and strengthened by his

experience there. God is a practical necessity in such a convulsed world to enable men to live in it.

In a remarkable article in *The Atlantic Monthly* for July, 1917, Maurice Barrès, a member of the French Academy, gives extracts from letters written by thirteen young French soldiers to their friends, all of whom afterward perished in battle. "In these young men," he writes, "is taking place a resurrection of our most glorious days. Some great thing is about to come into being. Let us listen to these soldier-boys, beloved of their comrades, lost in the rank and file, as they open their hearts to their families."

Alfred Cazalis, the son and grandson of missionary clergymen, writes: "First and foremost, my preoccupation has been with the righteousness of this war. I know that our cause is just and good, and that the right is on our side. But this war must not be sterile; from all these deaths there must burst forth new life for mankind. I think ceaselessly of the France of tomorrow, of that young France whose hour is at hand. A consecrated France it must be, in which there will be no purpose in life save Duty. Men will live only in so far as they realize their duty and strive to fulfill it. And it is for us Protestants — or rather, for us believers — to reveal this new life to the world. Our duty, then, is to go forth as apostles. Our duty is

plain; Jesus defined it: 'Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.' Perfect *through ourselves* — that is, developing our personalities to their utmost limit, making them yield the last least thing of which they are capable, and bringing them up to the ideal stature of Christ. Then, too, perfect *through others* (for surely we believe in the communion of saints!) which means praying for them, that they may learn to bend conscience and will before the kingly will of God. . . . Thus it was that I reached the greatest of the three experiences — a realization of the marvelous and incomparable worth of prayer."

"The young volunteer Paul Guieysse (he has since fallen on the battlefield) confides to a friend who accompanies him to the recruiting station, 'I love life so dearly that if I did not have an unswerving faith in the immortality of the soul, perhaps I might hesitate to enlist.'"

"Every one of their biographies," continues Maurice Barrès, "would tell of the deepening of the soul; and in the inner sanctuary of these different souls there burns the same fire. Have you noticed that they speak constantly of God — that they pray?"

"Captain Andre Cornet-Anquier, a Protestant soldier who died for France, tells us: 'A Catholic captain said the other day that he prayed before every en-

gagement. The major observed that it was no time for such things, and that he would better attend to his orders. "Major," replied the other man, "it doesn't prevent me from taking my orders and fighting, and I feel stronger for it." Then I broke in: "Captain, I do as you do, and I also am strengthened." ' 'Those happen to be two believers,' you will say. 'There are always some of *them* to be found.' Yes, but they are men of different religions, and they agree. About what? *A fact.* What does prayer mean to these soldiers? They tell us that it is something which makes them stronger; that they draw virtue from it. We have all read about such things, but these two men speak from their own experience."

"Noble is this jungamus dextras of these loyal soldiers; and beneficent this serene submission of believer and unbeliever alike to the great Fact; but my wonder goes far beyond this. The spirit of religion pervades this whole younger generation. They are not all equally sustained by it; certainly they are not all of the same creed, but history, in speaking of them, will use the words of Léo Latil: 'In this war the spiritual element dominates all.' " We may well join in the exclamation with which Maurice Barrès closes his beautiful and notable article: "What an epitome! What a thought beyond price! O young men of

France, worthier far than we! They shall live on; but even were they dead, our country shall be built anew with their souls, as with living stones." Such voices, which might be indefinitely multiplied from other sources, assure us that in the very fiery heart of this war faith in immortality lives as a sustaining power.

Let us, however, before leaving the subject, take a broader view of the world war and see if we can set it in a larger framework that will help to sustain our faith in God and in immortality. The first view of the terrifying spectacle is that all things human, law and order, liberty and life, literature and art, religion and Christianity, all the foundations and elements of civilization are being consumed in one vast and final conflagration. It would not be hard to believe, indeed, that the apocalyptic days have come, when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven."

But a deeper and longer view restores the sanity and serenity of our judgment and reminds us that destruction is usually in order to construction. The fiery volcano, belching forth far-flung destruction and death, spreads lava that presently crumbles into fertile soil and soon its very scorched, scarred slopes are covered with richly burdened vineyards and orchards. The storm that sweeps in destructive fury over the

earth leaves fuller streams and greener fields and bluer skies. A fire in a city burns down old buildings that are soon replaced by imposing modern structures. Many a church or college has gone down in flames to rise in a more capacious and beautiful building. Into the glowing blast furnace go raw materials of ore and coal and coke to come out as molten streams of iron that is tempered into steel and fashioned into all the structures of our material civilization. Into the melting pot of the goldsmith are cast all manner of outworn jewelry to be melted and refashioned into new and more beautiful forms.

The huge melting pot of the world at war is no exception to this general principle, but is only its vastest and most beneficent application. It may be hard to see and believe this fact amidst all the blinding smoke and flame and confusion of the hour, but the day will reveal it and we shall know in time that all things work together for good and shall wonder at what God hath wrought. The fearful destruction of our Civil War was the construction of a more solid and glorious republic, with a flag saved from the rent of disunion and cleansed from the blot of slavery, and God is now building a better Europe and a better world. Ever is it true that through the shadow of the globe sweeps the earth into a younger day.

Nations are being recast in this fiery regeneration. England, rudely awakened out of its island security and smug complacency, has muddled through its preliminary blunders and is attaining national and imperial unity and democracy and efficiency such as it never knew before. France, in the blazing baptism of war, has been cleansed of its light gaiety and frivolity and chastened into heroic sacrifice that the world has never seen surpassed. America is being shocked out of its materialistic money making and pleasure seeking and is laying its life on the altar of the world. All nations are finding their souls and the things of the spirit are becoming sublimely dominant among men.

The fundamental meaning of the war, at first obscured in the smoke of its outbreak, is now shining out clear. It is not all a mad welter of insanity about nothing, but it is a tremendous struggle of democracy with autocracy, and all nations are being cast into the melting pot of freedom. Russia has fallen as one huge continental mass of despotism into this crater and almost in a day has melted into democracy. Its elements are necessarily more or less dissociated in the initial stages of the process, but they are sure in time to be recast in the moulds of law and liberty. The old Russia is gone for ever, and the new Russia, it is hoped, will take its place, it may be after long trial and

travail, among democratic governments. Autocratic Germany itself is being undermined and shaken by the very war it started. The German people are beginning to seethe with the spirit of self-government, and the kaiser's throne and crown will sooner or later crumble down in the rising sea of democracy.

Out of the ruins of the old world we already see the promise and potency of the new world that is to be. Potentates are growing smaller and the people are growing larger. Thrones and crowns will be replaced by parliaments and presidents. The war is turning into a gigantic and determined war against war in which it is writing its own doom. All these old and new terrible engines of destruction are making war more difficult and finally impossible in the future. The world is at last drawing nigh to the realization of the vision so long beheld afar by prophets and poets, when nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares and shall build the parliament of man and federation of the world. Out of such warfare and victory will come the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness and peace.

This view saves our faith in God and justifies it. He still sitteth upon the circle of the heavens and ruleth amongst the children of men. Immortality will have no difficulty in maintaining its life and power in such

a world. These lives that flame up and burn out as fuel in this awful world conflagration are not uselessly wasted, but are the sacrificial price and means of a new world. Their blood will be the blessing of a thousand generations to come and will ever keep the world green and beautiful. And having fought the good fight of faith there is laid up for them a crown of righteousness which fadeth not away.

We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime.

Worlds are charging, heaven beholding,
Thou hast but an hour to fight;
Now the blazoned cross unfolding,
On, right onward, for the right!

## XXX

### VISIONS OF A WORLD WITHOUT GOD

In forming our decision on any subject we should consider its alternatives. It is not wise to tear down the old house before we have a new house built. The old habitation may be only a hut altogether inadequate and uncomfortable, but it may be better than going out into storm and night. The consequences of a decision may react upon and modify, if not reverse, our sense not only of its expediency but of its fundamental truth and right. In the field of moral truth there is a subjective element that enters into and helps to create the belief we form. We must make our ideals come true, and "the will to believe" thus turns our faith into fact. The alternatives to immortality should have their proper influence in determining our attitude towards it. Our moral and religious nature has its ineradicable and insuppressible rights in the matter, and it will declare its needs and cast its vote. We should therefore face the alternatives of immortality before deciding against it.

Faith in immortality is so intertwined with faith in a personal God that if we give up the one we shall

not long be able to keep the other. The two practically stand together, and if we abandon the hope of immortality we shall find ourselves in an atheistic world of starless night. The spectre of such a world is so destructive of all reason and right, faith and hope, and is so fearful that the soul shrinks from it in horror. The atheistic or pantheistic Absolute has been described as "an immense solitary spectre — it hath no shape, it hath no sound, it hath no time, it hath no place. It is, it will be, it is never more nor less, nor sad nor glad. It is nothing — and the sands fall down in the hour glass, and the hands sweep around the dial, and men alone live and strive and hate and love and know it." No sadder or more terrible words have ever been written than the confessions of atheists and agnostics in describing the world as they see it.

In the last paragraph of the last book Herbert Spencer wrote, he leaves the following as his last message to the world: "And then comes the thought of this universal matrix itself, anteceding alike creation and evolution, whichever be assumed, and infinitely transcending both, alike in extent and duration; since both, if conceived at all, must be conceived as having had beginnings, while Space had no beginning. The thought of this blank form of existence, which, explored in all directions as far as imagination can reach,

has, beyond that, an unexplored region compared with which the part which imagination has traversed is but infinitesimal — the thought of a Space compared with which our immeasurable sidereal system dwindles to a point, is a thought too overwhelming to be dwelt upon. Of late years the consciousness that without origin or cause infinite Space has ever existed and must ever exist, produces in me a feeling from which I shrink." And so the philosopher, who declared in his *First Principles* that religion "concerns us more than any other matter whatever," finally sat looking out into blank space in which there twinkled no star of hope. It is a sad and pitiful outcome of so ponderous and pretentious a system of philosophy.

Among his last words David Friedrich Strauss wrote: "In the enormous machine of the universe, amid the incessant whirl and hiss of its jagged iron wheels, amid the deafening crash of its ponderous stamps and hammers, in the midst of this whole terrific commotion, man, a helpless and defenceless creature, finds himself placed, not secure for a moment that on an imprudent motion a wheel may not seize and rend him, or a hammer crush him to powder. This sense of abandonment is at first something awful."

It was of such a world that Jean Paul Richter dreamed in his *Dream of a World Without a God:*

I dreamed I was in a churchyard at midnight. Overhead I heard the thunder of distant avalanches and beneath my feet the first footfalls of a boundless earthquake. Lightning gleamed athwart the church windows and the lead and iron frames melted and rolled down. Christ appeared and all the dead cried out, "Is there no God?" And Christ answered, "There is none. I have traversed the worlds, I have risen to the suns, with the milky ways I have passed athwart the great waste spaces of the sky: there is no God. And I descended to where the very shadow cast by Being dies out and ends, and I gazed out into the gulf beyond and cried, 'Father, where art thou?' But answer came none, save the eternal storm which rages on. We are orphans all, both I and you. We have no Father." Then the universe sank and became a mine dug in the face of the black eternal night besprent with thousand suns. And Christ cried, "Oh, mad unreasoning Chance; Knowest thou — thou knowest not — where thou dost march, hurricane-winged, amid the whirling snow of stars, extinguishing sun after sun on thy onward way, and when the sparkling dew of constellations ceases to gleam, as thou dost pass by? How every soul in this great corpse-trench of a universe is utterly alone?" And I fell down and peered into the shining mass of worlds, and beheld the coils of the great Serpent of eternity twined about those worlds; these mighty coils began to writhe and then again they tightened and contracted, folding around the universe twice as closely as before; they wound about all nature in thousand folds, and crushed the worlds together. And all grew narrow and dark and terrible. And then a great immeasurable bell began to swing and toll the last hour of time and shatter the fabric of the universe, when my sleep broke up and I awoke. And my soul wept for joy that I could still worship God — my gladness and my weeping and my faith, these were my prayer.

Let the earth desert God, nor let there ever henceforth be mention'd the name of God!
Let there be no God!
Let there be money, business, imports, exports, custom, authority, precedents, pallor, dyspepsia, smut, ignorance, unbelief!

— *Walt Whitman.*

Over against these visions of a world without God we set the prospect and promise of him who said: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Which of these two visions, the corpse-trench or the Father's house, makes the deepest and most convincing and compelling appeal to our total nature, mind and heart, reason and instinct, feeling and aspiration? The world has made no mistake in choosing the alternative of faith and hope.

Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!
She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg.

— *Tennyson.*

## XXXI

### SETTING SAIL

THE time for my unloosing is come, says Paul, I am about to unmoor my ship and set sail on the sea of immortality. Death to the Christian is boarding the ship, drawing in the gangway, casting off the cables that bind us to this world and launching out upon the unknown sea of darkness for the shore of the better country.

Preparation precedes setting sail. For weeks and months and possibly for years we plan for it. The country to which we are going is studied in maps and books as to its location, geography, climate, civilization, cities, people, customs, laws, literature and art. We become in a degree citizens of the country in advance, so that when we reach it we shall know how to conform to its laws and enjoy its life. And much preparation must also be made in the way of arranging our affairs in the homeland and providing such travelling outfit as clothing, tickets, berths and letters of credit for such a voyage. All this applies to our preparation for our departure for the heavenly country. We are to be interested in it and to study its ways so

that we shall grow acquainted with it even in this life. The Bible is the great map and guidebook of the far country, and it will furnish us with all needful information and outfit and enable us to live as citizens of it even in this world. All this preparation for sailing is not to draw us off from this life or throw a gloom over it, but is rather to enter into this life as a vital part of it and kindle it with new interest and eternal hope.

The hour of sailing is an eventful one to the sea-going traveller. At the dock all is novel and exciting. There is an immense and tumultuous confusion of strange happenings. Passengers and friends and a miscellaneous crowd of people are thronging upon the wharf, trunks and baggage are piling up and being put on board, gold-laced officers are giving commands and seamen are busy at every point, dense volumes of smoke are pouring from the great funnels, and the engines are waiting like restless giants to begin to churn the propellers. At length the warning bell rings, there is a clearing of the decks, the gangplank is drawn in, the hawsers are cast off, and the great ship moves out into the deep and the shore fades away.

The parting of friends is always a pathetic feature at a sailing. On every side one may see the last passionate embrace and kiss, the final good-byes, and

then salutes are signalled until the ship has passed out of sight. The sailing with many is a glad hour, but the smiles are also jewelled with glittering tears. Yet it is rarely a hopeless sorrow with which friends part, for they expect to meet again and be happier than ever. The parting of friends at death is one of the most pathetic scenes and heart-breaking trials of life. And yet even this parting is not without comfort, and our Christian faith assures our hearts of a glad reunion and turns our tears into jewels of hope. The ship is not lost when it sinks below the horizon, and the bark of the soul has not ceased to be when it passes into invisibility.

Setting sail, for the first time at least, is usually attended with fear. The coolest nerves and stoutest heart can hardly escape some sense of tremor and solicitude as the engines begin to throb and the ship recedes, soon to be swallowed up in the wide waste of waters or in the starless night, or to be rocked and tossed about like an eggshell in a storm. And death is such an experience in which we are unloosed from the solid and familiar shore of earth and sent out into the unknown, night-enveloped, storm-swept, mysterious sea of death. We mortals fear this sea and often stand shivering on its shore.

Yet as far as danger is concerned the sea is now as

safe as the land. Man has put a hook into the frothy jaws of this terrible leviathan and made it his captive servant, he has set his foot on its foaming billows and smoothed them into a safe path. The huge steel ship is now a floating palace as comfortable and luxurious as any palace on the land, and it ploughs through wind and wave as steadily and almost as swiftly as a locomotive speeds along its steel track.

And not only is the sea safe, but it opens a new and grand world of its own that soon absorbs our sense of wonder and fills us with new life. The wide blue expanse of the water, bounded by the far sharp circle of the horizon, is a scene of ever-changing motion and majesty and mystery. The colour is constantly alternating from blue to green and from green to black; and as the ship cleaves and tramples the sea into cloudy spray and foam it flings diamonds and pearls in showers from its prow and heaps up mottled iridescent waves, richly inlaid and fringed with jewelled fire. When the breeze freshens the waves begin to show their jagged white teeth, and when a storm blackens the sky and breaks into tempest, the sea seems a terrible monster that would devour the earth and the heavens; and yet the ship rides the storm safely, and one has strange sensations as he witnesses the sublime play of its power.

We know not how far we may apply these experiences on the ocean to human experience in death; but we may trust the analogy at essential points. Death is as natural as birth in the great plan of the world, and God has not provided safeguards for the one and then left the other to drift on the rocks of chance. If we can trustfully go to sleep in a ship of man's building and wake up in security the next morning out on the ocean, we can safely commit our souls to the Father of our spirits as he unlooses our ship out upon this mysterious sea. There is nothing more for us to fear in death than in life, and its rolling billows will be kind to us and bear us as safely as the solid ground of earth. And it may open to us a new world beautiful and grand as does the ocean, full of scenes and experience that will excite our interest and wonder beyond anything we can now conceive or dream. "Why should we fear death?" said Charles Frohman as he went down with the sinking *Lusitania;* "it is the most beautiful adventure in life."

The interest of a voyage culminates in its end. We set sail that we may land on a richer shore or that we may reach home. It is an hour crowded with new experiences and rare joy when we cross the gangplank into a new country and are lost in its life. There are usually glad greetings with friends who have gone be-

fore, and the old life passes into the new. Death unmoors our ship from the shore of this world that it may land us on the golden shore of heaven. The tumult of new experiences, the glad recognitions and reunions, the splendours of the celestial city, the throng of the redeemed, the glorified Christ in the midst thereof — all this awaits those who set sail for that shore.

Passage — immediate passage! the blood burns in my veins!
Away, O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers — haul out — shake out every sail!
Sail forth! steer for the deep waters only!
Reckless, O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me;
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.
O my brave soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther sail!

— *Walt Whitman.*

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

But tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

— *Tennyson.*

## XXXII

### ETERNAL LIFE

We have been moving in our arguments along two main roads leading to belief in immortality: the natural and the revealed grounds of this hope, or nature and revelation, science and Scripture; and these two now converge and meet in a view of the nature and conditions of eternal life that is a solid and satisfying conclusion of all our reasonings.

Herbert Spencer, in his *Principles of Biology,* Chapters IV–VI, has worked out, with remarkable insight and luminous exposition, the scientific grounds and nature of eternal life and has not hesitated to draw the inevitable conclusion. "Perfect correspondence," he declares, "would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet; and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them; there would be eternal existence and universal knowledge." "Eternal existence and universal knowledge,"— what is this but eternal life? Here, it would appear, on the ground of nature itself we are reaching our goal.

Science is at last speaking the very language of our faith.

That life depends on correspondence with environment is an obvious fact, open to the layman as well as to the biologist, although science enormously enlarges and illuminates our knowledge of the fact. Any living organism from the lowest single-celled plant or animal up to man can exist only as it is able to adapt itself to its environment of soil and air and temperature, food and light, activity and rest, and subtle chemical and physiological conditions. The microbe has a very narrow environment and only a slight power of adjusting itself to changes in it. It touches the world at only a few points, and a small change in temperature or food supply extinguishes its life. As life rises in the scale from single-cells to higher forms the organism increases in complexity and is dependent on a correspondingly more complex environment with an increased power of adjustment to it. The fish has for its environment the river or ocean, and the fox has the forest. The immensely higher organization of these vertebrates brings them into dependence upon an enormously more complex environment, and they also have greater plasticity for adjusting themselves to environmental changes. We also see a progression in the course of evolution from a lower to a higher environ-

ment. The first life was apparently born in the sea, and there it developed its organisms until they began to emerge from the water out upon the land and up into the air. The lung-breathing animals are of a higher type than the gill-breathing and live in a wider and freer environment.

This principle reaches its highest expression in man whose organism stands at the top of the scale and whose environment has become the earth and solar system and stars. He also has the largest power, on the whole, of adapting himself to changes. He can live in tropic heat or in arctic cold, on the land or on the water, on the plain or on the mountain, and can utilize an immense variety of food materials. His mental powers also enable him to contrive all manner of artificial adjustments and substitutes and cunning inventions and desperate devices by which he can adapt himself to changes in his environment, and thus he combats heat and cold, famine and flood, disease and death. Man in a measure is master of his environment and thus he protects and prolongs his life.

But death finally comes to man. Just what is its natural cause the biologists have not yet clearly determined. Though man may keep himself in the most favourable physical conditions, yet in time his organism undergoes changes that he cannot avoid or resist and

death is the result. These changes, however, are due to some lack of plasticity or power of the organism to maintain its adjustment to its environment. Could this correspondence be perfectly maintained in a perfect environment death would never result, and man would attain to " eternal existence and universal knowledge," or earthly immortality.

The earthly environment, however, is not perfect. It is never in a state of fixed equilibrium, but is ceaselessly swept with storms and waves, changes of temperature and humidity, fluctuations in nourishment and with disease, that constantly strain and rack the human body and tend to wear it out and overcome its power of adjustment and that finally compass its dissolution. And these continual, comparatively minute changes will eventually accumulate and culminate in such great changes of climatic and continental conditions as will greatly modify human life, or render its continuance on this planet impossible. And finally these secular changes will destroy the planet itself and dissolve the very solar system.

Eternal life in this world, constituted as it is, is therefore not possible. Life here does not find a perfect and permanent environment, and it does not have perfect and perpetual power of adjustment. But give it this perfect environment and endow it with perfect

plasticity and then biology itself asserts it will have "eternal existence and universal knowledge," or eternal life.

Having heard the voice of science on the nature of eternal life, we now turn to the voice of revelation in Scripture. What did Jesus, the Lord of Life, say that eternal life is? "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Here we have another definition of eternal life, which is yet not another but is fundamentally the same with that of science. Eternal life consists in knowledge, and knowledge is correspondence with environment. Our human life, physical, mental, social, esthetic, moral and religious, has its root and continuance in this correspondence.

Knowledge is the mental correspondence of our thoughts with things, our ideas with reality. We know matter in all its forms and activities and laws as we get our conceptions into correspondence and harmony with these things so that our ideas fit into and interwork with them as cogs in one wheel fit into and work together with the corresponding cogs in another wheel. Thus we get into correspondence with the earth down to its atoms and electrons, and with the whole heavens out through the solar system to the stars and nebulae. The wider and deeper is our knowl-

edge of these things the wider and deeper is our correspondence with them and power over them and the greater is our life.

In a similar way, our life consists in our knowledge of and correspondence with our social and esthetic, moral and religious environment. The more widely and deeply we know and enter into friendship with our fellow human beings the wider and richer is our social life. And how enormously does our knowledge of beauty in nature and art, mountain and sea, music and painting and sculpture, enlarge and enrich our life. To know these things is to get into correspondence with them and enjoy them as they grow incorporate with our very souls. Our moral knowledge broadens and deepens our life with still higher relations and enriches it with still more precious worths. And this process reaches its highest application and logical limit in our religious knowledge which brings our life into correspondence with God's life and fills us with his infinite fulness of truth and beauty and blessedness.

And this leads us right up to Christ's own definition of eternal life and shows us that his idea of it was no arbitrary view of his own, out of relation to reality and foreign to all our modern science and psychology, but was right in line with these and is still ahead of them. This is true of all his teachings; they are not

peculiar religious doctrines, ancient dogmas long since obsolete, or subjective conceptions remote from all our modern thinking, but they are rooted down in nature and are the eternal laws of life. We are only beginning to catch up with them.

This is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. Eternal life is correspondence with God. Paul expresses the same thought when he says that our life is hid with Christ in God; and this conception of eternal life runs all through the Bible and comes out in many forms of expression. All our life is so far correspondence with God, who is our true and all-comprehensive environment. Our physical life must correspond with his physical laws, or it cannot endure an instant. Our mental life corresponds with his mind so far as our ideas are true; and these true ideas let us into God's life and out into his liberty. The meaning of all our marvellous modern sciences and magic machines, railway and steamship, telegraph and telephone, automobile and airship, is just this, that we are getting to know God, into correspondence with him, and are so far sharing in his power and freedom, his life and liberty.

So, also, our esthetic knowledge lets us into the beauty of God. That God is beautiful is a frequent thought of Scripture, and all the beauty of the world

exudes from his nature. The mountain is but a suggestion of his majesty, the sunset is but a gleam of his glory, and the constellations are but the golden fringes of his garment. All musical chords and melodies, themes and compositions, are but echoes of the eternal song in his heart. The artist knows God intimately at this point, and art is one of the richest paths into his life. So also does our social and moral experience let us into the life of God. God is love, which is the bond and soul of social life, and he is righteousness, which is the ground of moral life, and in so far as we know these relations we correspond with him.

This brings us to the supreme expression of this principle. Our religious or spiritual life is our conscious knowledge of and correspondence with God. Our relation to God on the lower levels of knowledge may be unconscious, but when it enters the region of conscious faith and fellowship it becomes religion in the proper sense. This higher knowledge is not contradictory to or incongruous with the lower unconscious relation, but is its full flowering out and finest blossom and ripest fruit. It brings our life into its widest and deepest and fullest correspondence with God. It removes the obstruction and hindrance, the rebellion and blindness of sin and harmonizes the soul

with the holiness and will of God. It tunes the soul into unison with God at every point, physical, mental, social, esthetic, moral and spiritual, so that all its strings vibrate in harmony with him, and his life slips through it as music through a flute or as strains flow from an organ. All life swells into its fullest and finest, richest and sweetest as we know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.

Christ is the incarnation of God, God come down so that we can see him and enter into fuller relations with him. As we know Christ we know God, and as we live in the spirit of Christ we live the life of God. This process is going on through all the activities and means of the Christian life, and it reaches its completion when our lives are hid with Christ in God, perfectly harmonized with him, so that we live and yet not we but Christ liveth in us and we are filled with all the fulness of God.

Our life lies embedded in nature and ensphered in an infinitely wider and vaster world. The real environment of our life is God himself. All material forms of our environment, the soil and showers and sunshine, the earth and sun and stars, are but elements or aspects of this wider and final environment. God is not far from us or external to us, but is nigh us, even in our

hearts. "In him we live and move and have our being." "Closer is he than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

We then have in God and Christ a perfect environment, meeting and matching our life at every point, and subject to no changes, but the same yesterday, today and for ever. Our spiritual life also is capable of maintaining perfect correspondence with this perfect environment. Sinless purity and filial faith and fellowship will never permit the soul to fall out of harmony with God but will ever fold it closer to his heart and hide it deeper in his life.

Mr. Spencer's own definition of "eternal existence and universal knowledge" is thus fulfilled in the Christian life. Nature and revelation, science and Scripture, here unite and speak with one voice as to the nature of that life which contains no seed of death and will endure for ever.

It is to be observed that the deepest mark of eternal life is not simply endless existence: it is perfect correspondence; it is not a matter of quantity but of quality; not a relation to time, but a relation to God. Living is never mere lasting. A giant Redwood may be three thousand years old, but it does not have as much life in thirty centuries as a babe has in a month or a minute. Life is not measured by the circle of the

sun or by the longer circle of the stars. "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on the dial." Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay, and one crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name. Eternal life is harmony with God and this crowds the soul, not simply with years, though all the process of the suns and cycles of the stars are included in it, but with spiritual wealth and worth, with the noblest thought and feeling, sympathy and service and song.

Eternal life is therefore a present possibility and possession. It is not simply an attainment that may be realized only when we have passed beyond time into eternity. It is not a relation to time at all, but to God, and we may now enter into it. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life."

Nevertheless, the perfect correspondence with God which is eternal life will not be fully and finally realized in this world. It cannot be so realized here because the roots and remnants of sin still remain in us and also because we are now in part related to and correspond with the temporal, earthly and fleshly environment. This environment, which in-

cludes the body, can never be the basis of eternal life because it is not itself eternal. It is ever passing away from us, and we must presently pass away from it. But death marks the severance of the soul from this temporal environment and ushers it directly into the perfect environment of God. How much will go with the body, whether its senses and sensational experience will be shed along with the flesh, and the spirit be liberated into some higher type of knowledge and life, we cannot now know. But there are intimations of such higher knowledge and life in both nature and revelation. Evolution has been constantly lifting life from lower to higher types, the microbe to the vertebrate, the gill-breathing water animal to the lung-breathing air animal, and so on up to man. This line of ascent points on up to still higher forms, and the human soul may be only the germ and prophecy of life as much above this present form as the swift-winged, gorgeously-arrayed butterfly is above the slow-crawling, shaggy caterpillar.

Scripture points in the same direction. It is full of intimations and pictures and promises of a higher life than we can know or conceive. " Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we

shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "Now this I say, brethren," writes Paul, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." And equally significant is the declaration of Jesus that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

These Scriptural statements all point to a life released from sense and liberated into pure spirit. No doubt the spirit will have a spiritual body or an organism or means of relation to its environment, but it will not be like this "muddy vesture of decay," that has been so infected and loaded with the seeds of evil and death and has been the means of so much sin and sorrow in the earthly life. Such correspondence with God and with Christ will be pure life and liberty, beauty and blessedness. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Then shall eternal life begun here be completed there, and "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor

things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright;
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

—*Henry Vaughn.*

## XXXIII

### THE BEATITUDES OF DEATH

JESUS pronounced his beatitudes upon life, but John, his mystic disciple, pronounced a beatitude upon death as he heard a voice from heaven bidding him write, "Blessed are the dead." This beatitude cuts across and startles our customary views of death, but we frequently have our most familiar and fixed ideas reversed. We see things in a clearer light and truer perspective when we rise from the murky valley to the sun-bathed hilltop, and from the celestial point of view, death is set in a broader framework and brighter vision and is then pronounced a blessing. The meaning of this beatitude of death is not that life is a curse from which death is a blessed relief, after the manner of Hindu pessimism, but that life is good and death is life more abundant. We cannot see the beatitudes of death in their full light, but we can catch glimpses of them in our present world.

The first beatitude of death is that it is the end of mystery. Here we know in part, but we want to know more. However much we may know we are always

aware that our widest knowledge is only a pitiful fragment and often a very perplexing and painful one. What we do know is always teased and tormented, baffled and bewildered by what we do not know. Our life radiates from its centre in every direction but soon impinges on a circle of mystery against which we beat in vain. Often this mystery sorely tries our faith and shakes and threatens to shatter the very centre and core of life. Personal problems and perils, anxieties and sufferings and sorrows overwhelm us, and we are tortured with the meaning of it all, the meaning of the world and life, of death and the vast for ever. We may even wonder whether the world has any worthy meaning, whether it is not all a muddle and it were better that some kindly comet would clash with it and sweep it away in utter and final wreck. We long and cry for

> that blessed mood
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world
> Is lightened.

Death will end this mystery and bring the solution of these problems. The veil will be rent, the circle of mystery that now hems us in will be ruptured. "For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as

also I was fully known." Of course this enlargement and illumination of knowledge will be only relative to our present faculties and conditions and will still be finite and progressive. We shall never reach the utmost frontier or the central splendour of truth where the Omniscient One dwells in light unapproachable. But we shall step out of these earthly shadows into the clear light of the eternal morning, and these present trying mysteries shall be transcended and explained.

The second beatitude of death is that it is the end of discipline. Discipline is arduous training and painful preparation for future service, life and joy. The child in the home, the scholar in the school, the apprentice in the shop, the professional student in the college, the soldier in the training camp, our early life at every point is undergoing the process of education and preparation, and often it is attended with difficulty and drudgery, penalty and pain. Our whole earthly life is such discipline, and this is the deepest meaning of its struggles and failures, its sufferings and sorrows. The heavenly Father is educating us in the things of the spirit and developing us into pure and strong, fine and rich character. Many of the pages of life's book are bordered with black and stained with tears, but such pages teach us lessons that could not otherwise be learned. Our life's ore, dug from central gloom, is

heated hot in burning fears, and dipped in baths of hissing tears, and battered by the shocks of doom to shape and use. Our very mistakes become our kind masters, and we rise on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things. Child and school boy, apprentice and student are eager with hope and often strain on the leashes of discipline that they may bound forward into the real work of life and reap its fruits and taste its joys. When the preparatory discipline has done its work, the home and school are left behind, as the ripened corn leaves its withered husk and the mellow fruit drops from the tree.

Death cuts for us the leash of discipline and sets us free. It marks the point where we have completed our earthly education and are ready for larger service. Death is graduation day. It is the commencement of real life when we shall enter into fellowship with the spirits of just men made perfect, the ideal socialism of heaven, and into the service of eternity. Then shall we know what life is in its developed maturity and freedom and power and shall thrill with and revel in the beatific life of God.

The third beatitude of death is that it is the end of discontent. Our whole human world is one vast fermentation of unrest and dissatisfaction. It simmers and smarts in every individual life, and it boils up

out of our whole social order. It accumulates pressure like the steam and lava in a sleeping volcano, and then it breaks forth in the cataclysmic eruption of a world convulsion. Every one feels that he falls short of his needs, desires, ambitions, ideals. Not only do we fail on the lower levels of material goods, but on the higher summits of culture and art, righteousness and religion, the failure may be even greater and more painful. Nothing has been done which we feel is quite perfect and fully satisfying. The finest statue ever carved by the chisel of Phidias, or the most beautiful painting from the brush of Raphael, or the loftiest flight of the imagination of Shakespeare suggests and haunts us with a lovelier statue, or a more glorious masterpiece of colour, or a more daring and splendid utterance of poetic thought.

Back of the canvas that throbs the painter is hinted and hidden;
Into the statue that breathes the soul of the sculptor is bidden;
Under the joy that is felt lie the infinite issues of feeling;
Crowning the glory revealed is the glory that crowns the revealing.

Even nature falls below our ideals. The very mountains cower beneath the loftier ranges that uprear themselves in our imagination, and no sooner does the telescope disclose some far-distant and awful solar mon-

ster or vast nebula than imagination leaps beyond to a star or system vaster and grander still.

Discontent is thus planted in the very centre of our being and in the heart of the constitution of this world. Even when we are satisfied, as with material abundance and superfluity, we are soon satiated and our very satisfaction turns to loathing. The explanation of this incurable unrest is that this world is not our final home. It is the sufficient and satisfying environment of the bee and bird and beast, and they know no discontent, no "spark disturbs their clod." But "nearer we hold to God," and we cannot rest until we rest in him. This world is not big enough for our great spirits and we pant for the Infinite and Eternal. Death releases us from the limitations of this earthly environment and lets us out into the infinite and perfect environment of God. In union and fellowship with him all our powers of thought and feeling and action will find unhindered expansion and complete satisfaction. Our intellectual faculties will roam through infinite fields of truth and tackle problems of which we have never dreamed, our esthetic sense will bathe itself in beauty more grand and lovely than was ever suggested by human art or by the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces of this world, our wills will hitch themselves to celestial stars

of duty and service, our affectional nature will be satisfied with the perfect society of perfect spirits, and our sense of dependent childhood and yearning for a Father will be cradled in the Everlasting Arm, close to the loving heart of God. It is true that unattained starry heights will ever lure us on, but this prospect will be incentive and not discontent. "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake, with beholding thy form."

The fourth beatitude of death is that it is the end of sin and pain and sorrow. The sting of mystery and discipline and discontent and of death itself is sin. Sin is disharmony with God and is the root of all earth's troubles. The world is disjointed and enveloped in sorrow and shot through with pain, as the earth in a storm is wrapped in night and stabbed with sharp jagged lightning flashes, because of its sin. However the tragedy happened, the world has fallen out of right relations with God and rolled into the ditch, where it lies weltering in all its woes. Poison injected into the root diffuses its subtle malignancy and blights every leaf and bud, flower and fruit to the topmost branch and tip of the tree, and sin has been injected into the root of human nature. Every bitter tear contains some tincture or sediment of the insidious poison of sin. All human evil has some connection

with human wrong. Often the connection between the two lies upon the surface and stares and stabs us in the face, as in the drunkard's bloated features and the murderer's bloody deed, and then again it may lie hidden and buried under a dozen generations or a hundred centuries; but it is always there. The moon seen through a telescope may at first look dim and blurred, but when the instrument is properly adjusted or the eye is brought into right relations with the moon, it suddenly stands out clear, sharp and beautiful. The world is out of right relations with God and needs adjustment.

Death marks the point where this adjustment is finally effected. Redemption works atonement for sin and cleanses it away and ushers spirits without spot or wrinkle or any such thing into the presence of God, and then the sons of God are like him for they see him as he is. Never shall we be rid of these hindrances and burdens, these hot tears and this malignant blight and all the wars and wounds and woes of the world that now cripple and blight and blast our life until we are washed in the bath of God's redemption and are clothed in white. The forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe, does not grow in the heavenly country. Life shall there be freed from all the clogs and fetters, sufferings and sorrows of sin and unfold in sinless purity and

freedom, love and joy, beauty and blessedness. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

The final beatitude of death is that it is the end of transitoriness. The epitaph that is written over all things in this life is, "For the fashion of the world passeth away." Nothing seems so frail as human life, even more fragile than its own most delicate fabrics. The pyramids stand millenniums after their builders are forgotten, "The Transfiguration" outlasts Raphael, and "the coin, Tiberius." The family portraits, mere bits of painted canvas, remain on our walls long after the living forms have vanished, so that the images seem to be the abiding realities and their originals the fleeting shadows. Nowhere is this transitoriness so destructive and tragical as in our friendships, frequently dislocating them with separations in this life and at last tearing them asunder in the dissolution and agony of death. All the works of our hands, houses and cities and empires are perishing, and our spirits are ever passing into the unseen. The very mountains are flowing down into the sea, and the whole heavens are a vast conflagration that will burn to extinction and leave only a stupendous cinder-pile.

This transitoriness of the world has ever been a minor note in the still sad music of humanity; its melancholy undertone is heard in our most triumphant and jubilant hours. Yet the temporal itself suggests and has in it the promise and potency of the eternal. All the deepest and strongest intuitions and instincts of our being carry us beyond the transitory into the permanent. The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but something must abide. The perishing world hides a secret that cannot perish.

> In this broad earth of ours,
> Amid the measureless grossness and the slag,
> Enclosed and safe within its central heart,
> Nestles the seed perfection.

No faith is deeper and stronger in our hearts than this confidence and hope: it is the necessary postulate that conserves all the values of our life. Death is the transition from the temporal to the eternal. "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." For we look for "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Death is thus a fivefold beatitude in that it is an escape from the limitations of mystery and discipline and discontent and sin and transitoriness into the light

and liberty and bliss and finality of eternal life. It is true that eternal life itself may encounter limitations of its own, but these earthly limitations that here perplex and distress us will be transcended and life will reach its ideal of perfection and be crowned with glory. The soul will emerge, as a butterfly out of its cocoon, from this muddy vesture of decay and will be apparelled in light and set free in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Death is transfiguration. "There is no death: what seems so is transition."

The rise of man is endless. Be in hope:
All stars are gathered in his horoscope!
The brute man of the planet, he will pass,
Blown out like forms of vapor on a glass,
Child of the higher skies will rend his bars,
Laugh and reach out his hand among the stars.

There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forevermore.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless Universe
Is life — there are no dead.

## XXXIV

### HEAVEN

When we are travelling towards a city or country we are interested in finding out all we can about it; and if it is to be our home our interest grows intense. Heaven is to be our final home, and our earthly life is a pilgrimage towards it. We are therefore eager to get any bit of news from it we can, and look wistfully towards its gates in the hope that they may be left ajar and some of its glory may stream through. This yearning is not simply idle curiosity, but is a true instinct, and it has not been left unsatisfied. While the heavenly life lies beyond our experience and it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive it, yet there are hints and glimpses of it in the Scriptures, and it is right that we should cherish these. Our present constitution, also, is some guide to our presentiments of heaven. As from the structure of an animal the naturalist will deduce its environment and describe its whole life, so from the nature of the human soul we can foretell something of that world in which it will realize its full development.

In any such forecast we need to exercise self-restraint and caution. No doubt many of our traditional notions of heaven are fanciful and even absurd. The gorgeous pictures of the Book of Revelation when interpreted literally become impossible and repellent. These are obviously poetical and symbolical and are only intended to kindle our imagination. We should endeavour to penetrate through the sights and the sounds in these wonderful scenes into the sense, and we should ever remember that our most cautious statements are only symbols thrown out towards the ultimate reality. This does not reduce the significance of these symbols, for grand as they are the reality, we may be sure, is grander still. In endeavouring to step from this world into the next we follow our general principle of analogy and continuity. The heavenly life will be this life raised to its highest perfection and power. "On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round."

Heaven is pictured as a city in the Scriptural visions of it, and this word contains a world of suggestion. A city is human life crowded to its most glorious expression. All things human are there raised to their highest degree. It is a powerful magnet that attracts to itself the ablest men and the best things. Wealth is there concentrated in a rich soil that blossoms out into

magnificent streets, buildings, parks, and works of art. It is the scene of the intensest activities of men, where they fight their greatest battles and win their noblest victories. Human character there attains its fullest and finest development and shines out in greatest beauty. Great cities have ever been centres of civilization, the seats of government and power, commerce and education, literature and art. Rome was mistress of the ancient world, Athens was Greece, and Paris is France. It is true that human sin also reaches its greatest intensity in the city. In the midst of its abounding wealth and luxury is the direst poverty, its palaces stand close to its slums, and beneath its splendid robes are the most hideous shapes of evil. Heaven is a city without sin. All that is good and glorious in the earthly city is there realized in its ideal perfection, and its environment consists of golden streets and pearly gates whose splendour surpasses all our dreams.

As to the nature of life in this city we can only indulge in general speculations. We need not try to decide or even form an opinion on the question of the locality of heaven, or whether it has any spatial locality at all. Any theory of some central orb in the universe as the place of heaven has no foundation in the known structure of the universe and has little value. Heaven may be a place and no doubt in some sense is

a place, but it is chiefly a state, and it is with this that we are concerned.

In the evolution of life the body keeps pace with the development and needs of the soul, and therefore the heavenly body will correspond with the glorified soul. It will be a spiritual body, adapted to the spiritual world of heaven, raised in incorruption, power and glory. It may be endowed with new senses through which life will pour in upon us in new streams of knowledge and beauty. Our senses are so many windows opening out upon the world, and our present bodies are transparent at only five points; but the spiritual body may be transparent through and through, clear as crystal, through which we can look out upon every aspect of the world. It may also be armed with unknown powers of communication by which it can hold converse with distant places and persons and of transmission by which it can pass with incredible swiftness from point to point and even from world to world. We do not know what we shall be, but we may well believe that as the seed is to the full-blown flower and as the caterpillar is to the swift-winged insect, so is this present body to that glorified body with which we shall be clothed upon.

A suggestive glimpse into heaven is given us in the promise that we shall there come to " the spirits of just

men made perfect." This throws light upon the social order of that world. One of the most painful aspects of this world is its imperfect and unjust social order, so terribly out of joint, so full of burning wrongs and explosive elements that keep society in a welter of unrest and at times throw it into a convulsion, and the true order of society is the great problem of the ages that is yet largely unsolved. The main factor in such a solution is the character of men, for while a good social order will in some degree make good men, yet in a far greater degree good men will soon make a good social order. The spirits of just men made perfect would solve this problem in this world, and therefore in the better conditions of the heavenly world it will be adjusted into perfection. All friction and jealousies and wrongs will be eliminated in the social order of heaven and it will be a perfectly just and smooth and delightful society. We are safe in saying that it will be a democracy of spirits. The Kingdom of God is the most democratic institution and society in this world, in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, rich nor poor, but all are one in Christ Jesus and are kings and priests unto God. Much more, then, will the city of God be a democracy in which all will share in equal justice and in common rights and privileges. This does not mean

that all will be equal in gifts and powers and possessions. Such is not the meaning of the most perfect democracy in this world, and a world levelled to such equality would be a monotony impoverished of all variety and picturesqueness and greatly reduced in efficiency and beauty and joy, even as grass and flowers when mowed down to a level all look alike and their variegated beauty becomes a dull monotony. The spirits of just men made perfect will still have gifts differing, and this will issue in differing powers and possessions, ranks and responsibilities, offices and activities. But all will be equal in perfection, in rights and privileges, in blessedness and joy. Their capacities will differ, but every one's cup will be full. They will play different instruments in the orchestra of the heavenly choir, but all will join in the everlasting song.

Passing to the mind, we conceive that its essential processes of thought, perception, memory, imagination and reasoning, will still go on, but with increased clarity and power and under more favourable conditions. Truth no doubt can be gained there as here only through study. What means will be used, what teachers and schools and books will be available, we do not know; but in the very nature of finite minds these processes are necessary. With clarified and ever ex-

panding mental faculties, with the universe for our field and eternity for our school days, how shall knowledge grow from more to more; what problems we shall solve, what mysteries unlock, what grand systems construct, how our minds and hearts will glow with ever brighter visions of truth and beauty! Here we have but hints and gleams of truth, but there we shall begin to know what mind means and shall revel in its power. Yet we shall never reach the outmost bound of truth, and the wider grows our knowledge the vaster will loom the region of the unexplored that will for ever lure us on.

Our affectional nature will come to its full flower in heaven. Life is love more than anything else, and if this bright warm strand were pulled out of our redeemed nature it would be rifled of its richness and left colourless and cold. We shall there be social beings, knit together in service and companionship, friendship and love. Memory will bind us together in heavenly recognition of earthly ties, otherwise heaven would have no conscious connection with earth and would be for us just the same as eternal oblivion. God does not mean that we, who have been so closely and passionately bound together here, should be separated there. The same currents of affection that flow through our lives here will there flow in deeper and

richer streams. Affection will be purified from passion and burn in etherial flames. It will be universally diffused so that each will love all and all will love each, and yet it will glow intensely in personal relations. The very nature of God is love, and in heaven as on earth it is ever true that "now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

The esthetic nature will also come to its finest bloom in the heavenly life. Beauty is eternal, for it has its fountain and essence in the nature of God. As he has made this world so beautiful, how much more beautiful will be the higher and more perfect world, and how much fuller and richer will be the gratification of our esthetic faculties. All the Scriptural descriptions of heaven strain language to the utmost to give us some faint conception of its ineffable beauty. Its foundations are precious stones, its gates are pearl, and its streets are gold. This verdure-carpeted, flower-embroidered, azure-domed and star-fretted world is but a hint of the infinite wealth and splendour of beauty that will array that world in all lovely forms and colours. And of course there is music in heaven. John heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and they sang a new song.

> Where the bright seraphim in burning row
> Their loud uplifted angel trumpets blow,

> And the Cherubic host in thousand choirs
> Touch their immortal harps of golden wires.

All the chords and songs of earth are but preludes to the symphonies of those golden strings. As life rises to its highest and richest expression in this world it assumes artistic forms. Then the drama rises into poetry and speech soars into song. On this principle all life in heaven will express itself in art terms; all truth will be poetry, all scenes pictures, and all sounds music. Every one's sense of beauty will there be developed and given full expression and be satisfied.

Our moral and religious nature will reach its highest development and employment in heaven. The same principles of truth, trust, honour, justice, gentleness, goodness and love that bind us here will rule us there; only there will be no outer opposition and inner resistance to obstruct these laws and make them seem harsh restrictions upon our desires and freedom; but they will be so wrought into us that they will be our own spontaneous nature, and duty and desire will coincide in perfect and joyous liberty. Worship will also there reach its highest expression and joy. The sense of worship, which is just our sense of worth, will be purified and deepened through our whole nature; there we shall be able to see things so as to appreciate them at their true worth; there we shall be closer to God

and dwell in his light; and there we shall see Jesus. And yet there will be no formal ordinances of worship, for there is no temple in heaven. Symbolic shadows have vanished and only realities remain. All life there is religious, all days holy, and all work worship. There is no temple in that city because the whole city is one vast temple.

There will be employments in heaven that will match all our faculties. We are essentially active beings and never could be anything else. The idea that heaven is a place or state of effortless inactivity and comfort where the inhabitants forever recline on "flowery beds of ease" and "sing themselves away in everlasting bliss" is false to every fibre of our nature. All our powers will there urge us into action. Employments will be even more diversified in heaven than they are on earth. As all will still have gifts differing every one will be given service that suits and satisfies him. What this service will be we cannot now know, but it will surely be useful service, and doubtless one form of it will consist in serving one another. As civilization grows more complex we become more and more mutually dependent. This principle doubtless runs on up into heaven, and there we may be dependent on one another as we never have been before. God will have abundance of work for us to do. "His servants shall

serve him." What forms this service will assume, on what missions to far-off worlds it may send us, what responsibilities it may impose and rewards it may win, we cannot know, but it will turn all life into ministering and crown and glorify it with unselfishness and love; and all work and worship, life and love will run up into and be lost in the life and glory of God.

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame.
But each, for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It, for the God of Things as they are.

It may be asked, where comes in the reward, the rest, the joy of heaven, if life there is all service? The rest and reward consist in this service itself. The rest of heaven is not simply eternal idleness. Such rest would soon make us tired and become intolerable. The sunbeam that seems absolutely still and yet is incessantly active is a symbol of the heavenly life. The activities of the redeemed are attended with no friction and fatigue, but operate with perfect smoothness and ease; they are that perfect work that is perfect play. We shall rest in heaven, not from our work, but in our work.

Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to one's sphere.

The highest reward of service is always higher service. Joy is not something we get by itself, but it is just the music that floats off the harp of life when it is in perfect tune and is properly played. In this discordant world righteousness and reward, work and rest, service and satisfaction often get separated, but in that perfect world they are indissolubly interblended, and there all joy is service, and all service is joy.

All of these glimpses into heaven indicate that life there is marked by growth and progress through effort. It is not a fixed and final state into which the soul immediately passes at death, but continues the same essential processes of education and advancement that mark our life here. It is because of this growth and progress that the heavenly life can continue in the exercise of faith and hope, wonder and surprise, and of ever increasing blessedness and joy.

How does this view of the celestial city help our earthly life? What relation have the employments here to the employments there? They are training and preparation. The boy at school, poring over his books and wrestling with hard lessons, is gathering

knowledge, forming habits and developing power for coming responsibilities and service. Though he knows it not, every lesson mastered is a stone built into the foundation and structure of his future years. What he will be then depends on what he is doing now. This world is a school, and all our life is a training and preparation for the life to come. Every earthly day puts something into that celestial life, weaves a strand into the garment of character we shall there wear, fits us for some service that shall there be our employment. This thought lifts up every day and deed and makes it big with eternal destiny and transfigures it with coming glory. The very hardships and losses, disappointments and discouragements, sufferings and sorrows of this world are working for our good and laying up treasure for us in heaven. All the chords and discords of this life shall be caught up and transmuted into that everlasting song.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist,
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

— *Browning.*

Jerusalem the Golden,
  I weary for one gleam
Of all thy glory folden
  In distance and in dream!
My thoughts, like palms in exile,
  Climb up to look and pray
For a glimpse of thy dear country
  That lies so far away.

Jerusalem the Golden!
  There all our birds that flew —
Our flowers but half unfolden,
  Our pearls that turned to dew,
And all the glad life-music
  Now heard no longer here,
Shall come again to greet us
  As we are drawing near.

## XXXV

### CAN WE BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY?

CAN we believe in immortality? We have come to the final answer to our question. We have not reached the knowledge of demonstration and must still walk by faith. The chessboard of the world is composed of bright squares alternating with dark, and we can see any great ethical and spiritual question, in Browning's phrase, as faith diversified with doubt, or as doubt diversified with faith. We would fain see it all bright, but it is not so constituted. Something is left to our individuality and sovereignty, ethical affinity and aspiration, personal decision and action. It is ever so. At one of the last appearances of the risen Christ to his disciples, "when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted." Who shall penetrate to the secret of the individual will that turns the balance towards faith or doubt?

> Like you this Christianity or not?
> It may be false, but will you wish it true?
> Has it your vote to be so if it can?

Obedience is ever a vital organ of spiritual knowledge.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." Professor James said that the universe "feels like a real fight," and Donald Hankey says in his *Student in Arms: Second Series* that "True religion means betting one's life that there is a God."

The question of immortality is one of these decisive battlefields of life. Whether we see it as dominant faith edged with doubt, or as dominant doubt edged with faith, is something that each one must decide for himself. God has given us sufficient light for us to exercise faith and left enough shadows for us to entertain doubt. Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind.

Our intellectual reasonings on this question will more or less influence us in our decision, but the deepest influences will come up out of our hearts and will be rooted in our life. Our decision will go far towards determining the kind of life we live, but the kind of life we are living will go farther towards determining our decision. If we live as though death ended all we shall easily drift into this unbelief; but if we fight the good fight of faith and are mightily resolved to keep this great hope, its star will shine out in our sky and will not fail us.

Gathering up all the threads of our discourse, fol-

lowing all gleams of light, listening to all voices and intimations of mind and heart, nature and revelation, science and Scripture, and letting our deepest needs and finest moods speak, we join in faith with Socrates as, taking the fatal hemlock, he said, "The venture is a glorious one"; with Carlyle in his "Everlasting Yea"; with Job as he affirmed, "I know that my Redeemer liveth and apart from my flesh I shall see God"; with Paul as he declared that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality"; and above all we trust the Lord of Life and Master of Death, who prayed, "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

Reason and revelation, mind and heart, faith and hope, this world and the next, meet and receive their final answer and satisfaction in this *Everlasting Yea.*

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them. *Revelation 14:13.*

# INDEX

Printed in the United States of America.

THE following pages contain advertisements of books by the same author or on kindred subjects.

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

# The Basal Beliefs of Christianity

*Price $1.50*

This volume is an attempt to explain, from a popular point of view, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. These various doctrines are set forth in untechnical language and in the light of modern knowledge. The author realizes that many of those beliefs may fall out of touch with our day, if not in substance and spirit, then in form and expression. They necessarily change with the changing intellectual, social, and spiritual climate of their age, a change that may be slow and unperceived for a short time, but is sure and plain in the long run.

The author's aim is to present the principal doctrines of Christianity, not as a dry and rattling skeleton, but clothed in flesh and blood and pulsing warm with life. They should be woven of the same threads as the general web of human life, and its illustrations should be concrete bits of daily happenings.

---

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
**Publishers 64–66 Fifth Avenue New York**

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

# The World a Spiritual System

*Price $1.50*

A popular exposition of metaphysics from the idealistic point of view. It sets forth the object and method of metaphysics in untechnical language for general readers, and illuminates the subject with many concrete illustrations. It seeks especially to be constructive and work out a general theory of the world as a spiritual system.

"I am delighted with it."— Prof. JOHN E. CLARKE, *professor of Philosophy in Boston University.*

"His point of view is modern, and his application of his principle is splendidly expounded and defended."— President WILLIAM H. BLACK, *of Missouri Valley College.*

"It is the only book we have seen adapted to the average college student, and we welcome it as a new type of philosophical writing."—President JOHN A. MARQUIS, *of Coe College.*

"The clear, forcible style and well-defended conviction of the author vitalize the discussion, and set forth a broadly idealistic interpretation of the world so attractively that many will discover for themselves a new and practical interest in the subject."— Prof. EDWARD W. WEYER, *Professor of Philosophy in Washington and Jefferson College.*

---

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
**Publishers 64–66 Fifth Avenue New York**

# Immortality

An essay in discovery, co-ordinating scientific, psychical and biblical research.

Edited by CANON STREETER and written by A. CLUTTON BROCK, B. H. STREETER, DR. J. HATFIELD, C. W. EMMETT and E. W. BARNES.

*Cloth, 8vo, $2.25*

Among the main topics which this work takes up are the following: Certain Current Objections to a Belief in Immortality; The Grounds of Immortality; The Resurrection of the Body; Heaven; Re-Incarnation and Karma As Taught by Modern Theosophists; Communication with the Dead; Can Mind Survive the Destruction of the Brain; What Happens to the Sinner After Death, and The Communion of Saints. The volume, which has the same editorship as *Concerning Prayer,* is an important addition of permanent value to religious literature.

---

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
**Publishers 64–66 Fifth Avenue New York**

# A Theology for the Social Gospel

By WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

Author of "Christianity and the Social Crisis" and "Christianizing the Social Order."

*Cloth, 12mo, $1.50*

This book, which embodies the Taylor Lectures given at Yale during Convocation Week in April, 1917, takes up the old doctrines of the Christian faith, such as Original Sin, The Atonement, Inspiration, The Sacraments, and shows how they can be re-interpreted from a modern social point of view and expanded in their scope so that they will make room for the salvation of society as well as for the salvation of individuals. The work is practical and inspiring and covers ground not previously traversed by writers.

---

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
**Publishers 64–66 Fifth Avenue New York**